# CITY HILIGHTS

The Truth Speaks

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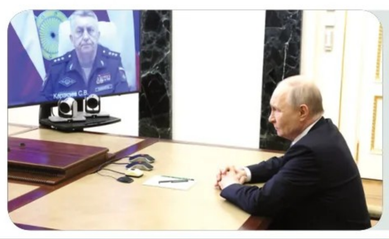

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# K'TAKA LIFTS 2022 ORDER BANNING HIJAB IN CLASSROOMS

The previous BJP govt had banned Hijab in classrooms, which had sparked a nationwide controversy

**BENGALURU**

The Karnataka government on Wednesday withdrew its 2022 order banning wearing hijab in classrooms and has issued a fresh order permitting students to wear a 'limited traditional and practice-based symbols'.

The preceding BJP government had, in February 2022, banned students from wearing hijab to classrooms, giving rise to a controversy as some Muslim girls were prevented from attending classes since their dress was not in accordance with the uniforms of the institutions.

The BJP government also insisted that the girls follow the uniform prescribed by the schools or colleges they were studying in.

Further, in March 2022, the High Court upheld the government order, stating that wearing hijab was not an essential practice in Islam. The Supreme Court, however, delivered a split verdict in October the same year.

The present decision of the state government follows strong objections raised by leaders of the Muslim community when the Congress did not give the Davanagere bypoll ticket to a Muslim candidate. Congress' Samarth Shamanur Mallikarjun won by a thin margin of 5,700 votes, which was attributed to a split in Muslim votes.

Muslim leaders reminded Congress that the hijab issue, among others, remained unresolved for nearly three years since the party came to power.

School Education & Literacy Minister Madhu Bangarappa released the fresh order at a news conference along with Health Minister Dinesh Gundurao, a Brahmin, and Shivajinagar Congress MLA Rizwan Arshad, a Muslim, in this regard.

### What does it mean?

The Karnataka government has withdrawn its 2022 uniform order that had imposed restrictions on religious symbols in educational institutions. The decision effectively removes the earlier guidelines that led to the hijab-related controversy in the state. Under the revised order, students in government, aided, and private schools and pre-university colleges are now allowed to wear religious symbols such as the hijab, sacred thread (janivara), rudraksha, and other traditional items along with the prescribed uniform. The earlier 2022 order had sparked widespread protests and legal challenges after it restricted religious attire in classrooms. With the latest move, the government has reversed its stance, while maintaining the requirement of a standard school uniform.

### KARNATAKA HIJAB BAN TIMELINE

- **JANUARY 1, 2022:** Hijab-clad students were barred from entering a government pre-university (PU) college in Udupi, citing uniformity among students. This led to protests and a student going to the High Court.
- **FEBRUARY 5, 2022:** The BJP-led Karnataka government issued an order under the Karnataka Education Act, 1983 prescribing a uniform for all students to wear in state-run educational institutions, effectively banning hijab.
- **MARCH 15, 2022:** A 3-Judge Bench of the Karnataka High Court upheld the Hijab ban in state educational institutions, which led to the case reaching the Supreme Court.
- **MARCH-AUGUST 2022:** Despite the immediate filing of the appeal, the Supreme Court did not hear the case for over five months, until August 29.
- **MARCH-AUGUST 2022:** Despite the immediate filing of the appeal, the Supreme Court did not hear the case for over five months, until August 29.
- **SEPTEMBER 21, 2022:** The Bench, comprising Justices Gupta and Dhulia, began hearing substantial arguments in the case and concluded the hearings on September 21.
- **TOCTOBER 13, 2022:** The SC Bench delivered a split verdict in the Hijab ban case.

# Big 'Vijay' for Thalapathy as TVK clears floor test

**CHENNAI**

**AIADMK cross-voting jacks up TVK tally to 144 in TN assembly; LoP Udhayanidhi Stalin says the Vijay-led govt sustains with 'borrowed' allies and by splitting the AIADMK**

The cross-voting by 25 rebel MLAs of AIADMK helped make the TVK government's floor test in the Tamil Nadu assembly on Wednesday a cakewalk.

With the help of the AIADMK MLAs, the TVK government's tally improved significantly to 144 amidst allegations of horse-trading by the opposition.

Leader of Opposition Udhayanidhi Stalin said that the TVK government was sustaining with "borrowed" allies and by splitting the AIADMK.

As many as 25 AIADMK legislators, including former ministers SP Velumani and CV Shanmugam voted in support of the Vijay-led Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam government during the floor test. On its own the TVK had 105 MLAs in the House when the floor test was taken up.

AMMK's lone MLA from Mannargudi S Kamaraj who was expelled by the party chief TTV Dhinakaran on May 12 for supporting the TVK, voted in favour of the government.

## NEET paper leak: CBI arrests 5

**NEW DELHI**

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Wednesday arrested five people across the country in connection with the alleged irregularities and paper leak of the NEET-UG 2026 examination.

While three arrests were made in Jaipur, one each was nabbed from Gurugram and Nashik. Several other suspects are currently being examined.

The agency also raided several locations nationwide after it registered a case on 12 May 2026 on the basis of a written complaint received from the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India.

The FIR was registered for offences including criminal conspiracy, cheating, criminal breach of trust and other relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the Prevention of Corruption Act, and the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024. On Wednesday, the CBI also visited NTA headquarters to collect documents related to the NEET UG examination, which was cancelled following allegations of paper leak, officials said.

The team also interrogated officials involved in the examination process, they added.

Shubham Khairnar (30), resident of Nandgaon in Nashik district, was sent to CBI transit remand by a local magistrate court there. Nashik Police had detained Khairnar on Tuesday following a request from Rajasthan Police.

Several suspects who were detained by Rajasthan Police were also examined by the CBI in connection with the case, according to officials.

# GBA TO OPEN NEW CENTRES FOR E-KHATA SERVICES ACROSS 52 LOCATIONS

**BENGALURU**

Seeking to streamline e-khata services amid allegations of harassment by officials, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has launched a new initiative called 'Open House', where citizens can access all property-related services, B-khata to A-khata conversion, at a single location. Starting May 16, the temporary kiosks, which will function only on Saturdays will be opened at 52 locations across Bengaluru, including ward offices and schools.

Describing the campaign as 'My Khata, My Right', Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said the scheme is part of the state government's 'Bhu Guarantee' initiative, or the sixth guarantee, which ensures that citizens' property records are not tampered with.

"There are 23 lakh properties within the GBA limits. We have created a database for all properties that is secure, trustworthy and digital," Shivakumar told reporters. As part of the campaign, the GBA will hand over physical copies of e-khata documents — both draft and final — to owners of all 23 lakh properties by visiting their homes, he added.

In order to improve delivery of citizen services and effectively respond to grievances, the GBA and the five newly carved-out corporations will establish 'e-Khata Citizen Open Houses' at 52 locations every Saturday, the Bengaluru Development Minister said. The initiative will begin on May 15, he pointed out, adding that around 5,000 citizens are expected to benefit from it every Saturday.

*More on page 2*

**Among the services to be offered at these Open Houses are issuance of final e-khata, new e-khata, and conversion of B-khata to A-khata.**

### Services available at Open House

Among the services to be offered at these Open Houses are issuance of final e-khata, new e-khata, and conversion of B-khata to A-khata. Officials said priority would be given to clearing pending applications from property owners whose requests were previously rejected online. Citizens can also walk into the Open House without prior appointments. Each Open House will have adequate manpower to handle up to 100 applications a day, the press note stated. The centres will feature special counters, seating arrangements, a queue management system, internet-connected computers, printers and scanners, as well as payment counters, if required. Assistant Revenue Officers (AROs), revenue inspectors, technical staff and senior officers will also be present at these centres. Citizens have been requested to visit the centres with the required property documents, officials said. Shivakumar added that staff and officers working on the second and third Saturdays — generally government holidays — will be entitled to compensatory leave. The campaign, he said, has been launched with the intention of reducing pending applications, delivering citizen-friendly services and ensuring transparency in governance.

## Rangasamy's 5th term as Puducherry CM begins

**PUDUCHERRY**

N Rangasamy was sworn in as Puducherry Chief Minister for a record fifth term on Wednesday, as the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) retained power in the Union Territory following the recent Assembly elections.

The swearing-in ceremony was held at the Lok Bhavan in Puducherry, where Lieutenant Governor K Kailasanathan administered the oath of office and secrecy to Rangasamy and the newly-inducted ministers. Along with the CM, A Namassivayam and Malladi Krishna Rao took oath as Cabinet ministers.

With the latest swearing-in, Rangasamy has become the first leader in Puducherry's history to hold the office of Chief Minister five times, further cementing his position as one of the UT's most influential political figures.

# GBA elections as per court directions: DyCM

**BENGALURU**

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Wednesday that polls to the five corporations under the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) will be held as per court directions.

He was replying to reporters' query on civic body elections at the GBA office here.

On revenue expectations from GBA this year, he said, "Let us see when the revenue numbers come in. We are not looking at revenue figures right now. We must protect the lives of people who are reeling under price rise. In these difficult times — when people are being told not to buy gold, reduce fuel consumption and avoid foreign travel — things should get better for the people."

**'A great insult to nation'**

On cancellation of NEET-2026, he said, "The NEET question paper leak is a great insult to the nation, and the Union Ministers and Members of Parliament must answer. If similar incident had happened in our state, we would have faced severe attacks by now. Students and parents, who had built many dreams and worked hard for the exam, are outraged."

## Impasse ends: Cong to declare Kerala CM today

**NEW DELHI**

Kerala will have to wait for one more day to know who its new Chief Minister will be with the Congress saying all discussions have been completed but pushed the announcement to Thursday.

The decision to announce the name a day later came soon after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi held a final round of discussion here on Wednesday evening.

"As authorised by the members of the Congress Legislature Party in Kerala, the Congress high command has completed all discussions. The decision on who will be the next Chief Minister of Kerala will be announced tomorrow (Thursday)," Congress General Secretary (Communications) Jairam Ramesh told reporters after the meeting.

It was not immediately clear why the announcement has been delayed to Thursday even as the High Command has come to a conclusion on the name for the top post in the state for which there are three contenders – KC Venugopal, VD Satheesan and Ramesh Chennithala.

**JUST A CAUTIOUS STEP**

# *'PM Modi's appeal about wise spending, not austerity'*

**NEW DELHI**

The Centre on Wednesday clarified that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal is not about spending less but about spending more wisely by reducing fuel consumption, avoidable dependence on imported goods, and foreign-currency-intensive services.

Official sources emphasised that the Modi government is not cutting capital expenditure, welfare spending, or subsidies in any manner.

While chairing a Cabinet meeting, Prime Minister Modi urged his colleagues to curtail unnecessary expenditure, particularly on petrol and other resources, in view of the ongoing West Asia crisis.

He is learnt to have asked ministers to focus on cost-cutting measures and consciously reduce the use of resources.

Sources said the Prime Minister also directed ministers to reduce the size of their official convoys and limit non-essential foreign visits.

Several ministers have already announced steps in this regard.

Modi has also asked for electric vehicles to be included in his own convoy wherever possible, without making fresh purchases.

Government sources stressed that the Prime Minister's call to conserve fuel, adopt work-from-home wherever feasible, and reduce avoidable foreign exchange outflows does not amount to "austerity measures," a term that carries a negative economic connotation.

**PM asked Indians to cut fuel use, delay gold buys and avoid foreign travel; Centre said the voluntary appeals were meant to protect foreign exchange reserves, not signal austerity**

Modi during a rally organised by the Telangana BJP in Hyderabad on Sunday urged citizens to reduce fuel consumption and spend more wisely amid the West Asia crisis.

He suggested several practical steps, including reducing petrol and diesel consumption, using metro rail services in cities, carpooling, greater adoption of electric vehicles, shifting parcel movement to railways, and working from home to conserve foreign exchange.

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw echoed the Prime Minister's message, stating, "PM Modi has been guiding us about the less usage of products from outside. I also appeal to everyone to use limited overseas products and focus on self-reliance."

## QUICK READ

### 'Locked, vacant houses to be rechecked during census'

**CH News**, Bengaluru Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar directed officials to conduct a fresh census verification of locked and vacant houses within the jurisdiction of the North Municipal Corporation. He said special mop-up operations were being carried out every evening and during holidays to ensure no household was left out of the census process. According to officials, charge officers, assistant charge officers, supervisors and enumerators participated in the re-verification exercise across enumeration block boundaries. Authorities stated that the first phase of house listing and house census work was nearing 100 percent completion across the corporation limits.

### Water Board Chief on manhole overflow

**CH News**, Bengaluru Dr Ram Prasat Manohar instructed officials to complete drainage desilting works within 15 days to prevent inconvenience to citizens during the upcoming monsoon season. Chairing a monsoon preparedness meeting at the Water Board headquarters, he said preventing flooding in low-lying areas and stopping manholes from overflowing should be the top priority. He directed officials to identify rain-sensitive areas vulnerable to waterlogging and infrastructure damage. The Chairman also instructed zone-wise chief engineers not to remain confined to offices and instead personally inspect field locations regularly. Officials were further directed to submit comprehensive reports to the central office detailing precautionary and preventive measures being implemented ahead of the rainy season.

### Road widening drive intensified to ease traffic

**CH News**, Bengaluru Lokhande Snehal Sudhakar inspected Munnekolalu, Balagere-Panathur and Gear School roads under the Bengaluru East City Corporation limits to speed up land acquisition and the Transferable Development Rights (TDR) process for road widening projects. During the inspection, the Additional Commissioner directed TDR division officials to examine applications submitted by landowners and expedite approvals related to road widening under the Revised Master Plan-2015. He also instructed officials to take possession of properties where formalities had already been completed and begin widening works without delay to reduce traffic congestion in the area.

# DCM announces major land regularisation and urban reforms for Bengaluru

D K Shivakumar announced series of land regularisation, housing & infrastructure reforms aimed at improving urban governance

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D K Shivakumar on Wednesday unveiled a set of major initiatives focused on land regularisation, property digitisation and infrastructure expansion to streamline civic administration in Bengaluru.

He said the government would launch the "My Account, My Right" campaign on May 16, which will be held across 50 locations in five municipal corporations. The initiative aims to resolve e-khata-related issues directly through citizen open house meetings.

Shivakumar said Karnataka has already digitised more than 23 lakh property records under the e-khata system, making it one of the largest digital land record databases in the country. Citizens can access records through the official portal and obtain verified documentation in a transparent manner.

The government has also announced a major incentive scheme for conversion of B khata properties to A khata. Property owners who pay the required fees within 100 days will receive up to 60 percent discount.

He further announced that the permissible building violation regularisation limit has

been increased from 5 percent to 15 percent, subject to penalty payment and compliance conditions.

A one-time settlement scheme for unauthorised layouts without BDA approval will be introduced, with applications opening from June 15 for a three-month window. Authorities said the move is expected to bring large numbers of properties into the legal framework.

As part of broader urban development plans, 18,000 sites will be allotted to Shivaram Karanth layout landowners after legal clearance and digital allocation processes.

The government also announced the "Green Bengaluru" programme scheduled for June 27, under which 15 lakh saplings will be planted across the city.

Officials said the combined measures aim to improve transparency in land records, accelerate housing delivery and strengthen infrastructure planning in Bengaluru.

### 'Bhoo Guarantee' to streamline property reforms

Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Wednesday announced the 'Bhoo Guarantee' initiative aimed at streamlining urban property records and strengthening digital land ownership rights. The scheme includes e-Khata reforms, B to A Khata conversion benefits and a 60 percent fee discount for payments made within 100 days. It also focuses on transparent digital documentation, reduced building violation penalties and improved citizen access to property services. Officials said the 'Bhoo Guarantee' will benefit lakhs of property owners across Bengaluru by ensuring faster approvals and legal clarity. The campaign will begin on May 16 across multiple civic locations in Bengaluru.

## Bomb threat caller's mental health under scanner as multi-agency probe continues

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Fresh details have emerged in the investigation into the bomb threat call made during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Bengaluru, with investigators now probing whether the arrested individual is mentally unstable or linked to a larger conspiracy.

According to police sources, the accused, identified as Lohit, had allegedly made threatening calls not only to the Karnataka police helpline but also to the Tamil Nadu police helpline and several investigative agencies across the country.

Investigators said Lohit had recently been brought back from a de-addiction centre where he had been undergoing treatment. During this period, he reportedly accessed police and security agency helpline numbers online before making the calls.

Officials also recovered contact numbers of agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), National Investigation Agency (NIA) and other central investigative bodies from his mobile phone.

The accused has been questioned extensively by teams from State and Central intelligence agencies, the Internal Security Division (ISD), the NIA and the Tamil Nadu Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS).

However, officials said Lohit has been giving inconsistent answers during interrogation, raising doubts about his mental condition.

Family members have reportedly submitted medical records stating that he has been undergoing treatment for mental depression.

# NEET retest uncertainty leaves Karnataka students exhausted, anxious

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Shock, disappointment and uncertainty swept across Karnataka's student community after reports of a question paper leak in the May 3 NEET examination triggered concerns over a possible retest.

Around 1.5 lakh students from the State had appeared for the national-level medical entrance examination, considered the gateway for admission to MBBS and other medical courses. Many aspirants, who had spent months preparing intensively, said the controversy had left them emotionally and mentally exhausted.Students described the situation as particularly distressing because they had already completed rigorous schedules involving school, coaching classes and long study hours with little personal time.

"Many of us are emotionally drained. It is not easy to regain the momentum," said one student preparing for a possible re-examination.

Several aspirants criticised the National Testing Agency (NTA), which conducts the examination, alleging negligence despite previous controversies surrounding entrance tests.RC Prateeksha, a drop-year student preparing at a coaching institute, said the development had deeply affected students' confidence and health."After last year's disappointment, I put in so much effort. It's heartbreaking now. NTA should take more care and responsibility," she said.For many long-term aspirants, the uncertainty has reopened emotional stress they believed had finally ended after the examination.

"I can't shift to another career option, and I can't give up on my dream either," said K Susiraji, who has been preparing for NEET over multiple attempts.Parents too expressed concern over logistical and emotional challenges linked to a retest. One parent said his son, studying in a residential school in Karkala, was reluctant to return for another examination after mentally moving on from the preparation phase.Teachers and academic counsellors observed mixed reactions among students. Raghavendra Hegde, a NEET mentor, said candidates scoring between 500 and 580 marks appeared particularly upset, while some lower-scoring students viewed the retest as another opportunity.Education experts noted that several students were now reconsidering their career choices.

**Several students expressed fears of burnout, besides reduced preparation time for a re-test.**

G Sridhar, Founder of Deeksha Networks, said many students were exploring engineering and CUET-based admissions instead of continuing with uncertain medical entrance preparations.However, not everyone opposed the retest. Muniswamy Thimmegowda, father of a high-scoring candidate, welcomed the move, saying it would ensure fairness and prevent malpractice from affecting deserving students seeking seats in top medical colleges like Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute.

## IT-BT firms likely to resist new flexi work hour regulations in Karnataka

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The Karnataka Labour Department is preparing for fresh friction with the State's IT-BT industry as companies are expected to seek exemptions from the Centre's newly notified 48-hour weekly flexi work cap under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code.

Officials said concerns have emerged because the IT-BT sector already enjoys a five-year exemption under the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946, and many companies may consider rigid flexi-hour regulations unsuitable for project-based operations and global work schedules.

Labour Minister Santosh Lad said the government was not willing to dilute employee work-hour protections despite requests from industries.

"We had received requests from companies for 11 to 12 working hours per day, but those proposals were rejected outright," Lad said.

He added that Karnataka had already adopted flexi-

hour provisions earlier and the State did not currently foresee major implementation concerns.The Labour Department is expected to hold a meeting later this week to finalise operational rules and prescribe penalties for violations under the new framework.Officials stated that Karnataka, which introduced flexible work week provisions through amendments to the Factories Act in 2023, would now align its rules with the Centre's latest notification.he earlier amendments had enabled extended daily work shifts for a mobile phone manufacturing company operating in the State.

However, officials clarified that companies seeking approval for flexible schedules would now have to meet stricter compliance conditions.

According to Labour Department sources, firms proposing longer daily shifts and reduced workdays would be required to provide mandatory dormitory facilities, canteens and health infrastructure for employees.Authorities also indicated that physical inspections would be conducted before approvals were granted for any flexi-hour arrangements.Officials further said the IT-BT sector was expected to seek special exemptions from the proposed rules, similar to exemptions previously sought under other labour regulations.Industry representatives are reportedly concerned that tighter work-hour controls could affect operational flexibility, particularly for firms dealing with overseas clients and time-zone-dependent projects.The Labour Department, meanwhile, has maintained that employee welfare and workplace safeguards would remain central to the implementation process.Government sources said the State intends to strike a balance between industrial flexibility and labour rights while framing the final rules for implementation across sectors.

## Private Schools Assn Opposes Proposal for Online Classes amid Global Tensions

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Private school management bodies and educationists in Karnataka have opposed suggestions to shift school education online in view of concerns arising from the ongoing Iran conflict, arguing that students are still recovering from the long-term impact of pandemic-era virtual learning.

D. Shashi Kumar said schools should continue with physical classes and warned against repeating the disruptions experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"For over 500 days, schools remained shut during the pandemic. We are yet to recover from the impact it had on children and their learning levels," he said.

He maintained that online education may work for higher education institutions but was unsuitable for school students, particularly at the primary and secondary levels where classroom interaction plays a critical role in learning and development.Educationist V.P. Niranjanaradhya also criticised the recommendation, saying education extends beyond textbook instruction and digital delivery ."Education is a holistic process involving social development, play, interaction with classmates, creativity and the building of human values," he said.Niranjanaradhya further pointed out that students continue to face several lingering problems caused by prolonged online learning during the pandemic. These include mental stress, loneliness, learning difficulties, vision-related issues, mobile phone addiction and reduced social interaction.

He stated that many of these concerns remain unresolved even years after schools reopened.The educationist also noted that several countries had introduced regulations and restrictions on excessive use of digital technology in classrooms due to concerns over its impact on children's mental and social wellbeing.

School management representatives said any future policy decisions involving online education should prioritise children's developmental needs and learning outcomes rather than relying solely on emergency measures adopted during the pandemic period.

### Debris, piled-up soil led to Bowring Hospital wall collapse, report revealst

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

A government-appointed inquiry committee has identified construction debris, accumulated soil, and a nearby cricket practice facility as the primary factors behind the collapse of the Bowring Hospital compound wall, which killed seven people during heavy rain and strong winds on April 29.The committee, headed by Urban District Deputy Commissioner G. Jagadeesha, found that a large quantity of construction debris had been dumped in the vicinity of the wall. Though the compound wall stood about eight feet high, debris had been piled up to nearly six feet against it, significantly weakening the structure.

FIGHTING FOR IDENTITY

# *Inspired by TVK, JD(S) considers regional rebranding*

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The rapid political rise of C. Vijay and his party Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam in Tamil Nadu has sparked fresh discussions within Janata Dal (Secular) over rebuilding itself as a stronger regional political force ahead of the 2028 Karnataka Assembly elections.Sources within JD(S) said the party leadership and senior functionaries were increasingly debating the need to revive the organisation's independent identity and reduce long-term political dependence on the BJP. Party insiders pointed to TVK's ability to quickly mobilise regional sentiment and attract young supporters despite being a relatively new entrant in Tamil Nadu politics. This, they believe, has highlighted the continuing relevance of regional identity politics in southern states.Several leaders reportedly feel JD(S) can attempt a similar repositioning by projecting itself once again as a Karnataka-centric regional outfit focused on agrarian issues, regional aspirations and consolidation of the Vokkaliga community.The internal discussions mark a notable shift after JD(S) entered into an alliance with the BJP ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, primarily to consolidate anti-Congress votes in the Old Mysuru region. While the alliance helped the party electorally in some constituencies, concerns have reportedly grown within sections of the organisation over JD(S) gradually losing its distinct political identity."JD(S) was strongest when it projected itself as an independent regional force rather than as part of a national coalition," a senior party functionary said.As part of the revival exercise, the party has already begun organisational restructuring by reshuffling office-bearers and appointing new spokespersons to strengthen communication and public outreach.

## Karnataka High Court Quashes Detention Order under Goonda Act

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has set aside the preventive detention of Hussain Kabeer under the Karnataka Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Drug Offenders, Gamblers, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders and Slum-Grabbers Act, 1985, citing non-application of mind by the detaining authority.The order came after Kabeer's wife, Dilshad, approached the court alleging illegal detention.A division bench comprising Justice Anu Sivaraman and Justice Tara Vitasta Ganju observed that the authorities failed to properly examine the nature and outcome of cases registered against the detainee before passing the detention order.

"The detaining authority did not notice, while recording its satisfaction, that in a majority of cases, the detainee was either acquitted or compromise took place," the bench noted while pointing to lack of proper application of mind.

QUICK READ

## HDK hits back at Cong over Modi's energy conservation remarks

**CH News**, Bengaluru Union Minister H. D. Kumaraswamy criticised Congress leaders for attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi's remarks on energy conservation, saying they were displaying political pettiness. Speaking in Bengaluru, Kumaraswamy said Modi's appeal was aimed at protecting the country's economy and preparing for future crises. He noted that India depends heavily on imported oil and stressed that conserving energy was in the national interest. "If Congress was in power, what solution would they have offered?" he asked. He urged all political parties and state governments to cooperate responsibly .

## Sudhakar urges decentralisation of NEET after paper leak controversy

**CH News**, Bengaluru Following the controversy surrounding alleged leaks in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET), Higher Education Minister M. C. Sudhakar urged the Centre and the Supreme Court to decentralise the examination process and allow states to conduct NEET independently. Speaking in Bengaluru, Sudhakar said Karnataka had already passed a resolution seeking the scrapping of NEET in its current form. He argued that decentralising the examination system would help prevent disruptions and irregularities. Around 1.45 lakh students from Karnataka had registered for the exam, of whom nearly 1.40 lakh appeared, recording an attendance rate of 96.39 percent. "

## One killed, two injured in hit-and-run accident

**CH News**, Bengaluru A 40-year-old man was killed and his wife and daughter suffered serious injuries after a speeding Audi car rammed into them in a hit-and-run incident near Chikkajala. The deceased was identified as Mahesh. The family was reportedly returning home after attending a wedding function when the accident occurred. Police said Mahesh died on the spot due to the impact of the collision, while his wife and daughter sustained severe injuries and were rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment. The driver of the Audi car allegedly fled the scene immediately after the accident without offering help to the victims. Officials from the Chikkajala traffic police station rushed to the spot soon after receiving information and conducted a preliminary investigation.

# Karnataka seeks global partnerships for bioenergy investments

State highlighted massive biomass potential while seeking global investment support for sustainable energy.

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

S. E. Sudheendra, Chairman of the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board and Vice President of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee, held discussions with Chevalier Nirj Deva on opportunities for investment and collaboration in Karnataka's expanding bioenergy sector.

During the meeting, Sudheendra highlighted Karnataka's vast biomass resources and explained the State's efforts to strengthen renewable energy production through international partnerships and private investments.

According to him, Karnataka currently possesses nearly 1.5 crore metric tonnes of biomass, creating enormous potential for producing bio-briquettes, bio-pellets, biodiesel, compressed biogas and green hydrogen.

Sudheendra said the Karnataka State Bioenergy Development Board had already initiated several measures to attract investors by promoting next-generation biofuel projects and creating a favourable industrial environment for renewable energy ventures.

He added that the State government was expected to take further policy decisions shortly to accelerate the growth of the bioenergy sector. Necessary infrastructure, incentives and concessions had already been introduced to encourage domestic and international investments, he said.Sudheendra also informed the Commonwealth Union delegation that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had shown strong interest in renewable and sustainable energy initiatives and remained committed to expanding Karnataka's green energy ecosystem.He further stated that Rural Development, Panchayat Raj and IT-BT Minister Priyank Kharge was working on plans to promote bioenergy generation using agricultural residue and municipal solid waste, especially in rural areas.Chevalier Nirj Deva reportedly responded positively to Karnataka's initiatives and praised the efforts of the Bioenergy Development Board in promoting sustainable energy solutions.He assured the delegation that he would encourage global investors to explore opportunities in Karnataka's renewable energy sector and help strengthen future partnerships in clean energy development.

## Remove silt from rainwater canals, says DS Ramesh

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Eastern Municipal Corporation Commissioner DS Ramesh has instructed officials to prepare a ward-wise action plan for the maintenance of rainwater canals and ensure that silt removal is carried out once every three months to prevent flooding and disaster situations.

He reviewed the progress of development works undertaken under CMIDP and SSIP grants, along with the clearance of dilapidated and unsafe buildings within municipal limits.

Ramesh stressed that priority should be given to the maintenance of key stormwater infrastructure, including the 35-km rainwater canal in the Mahadevapura zone and the 45-km canal in the KR Pura zone. He directed officials to maintain strict monitoring of these stretches, especially ahead of the monsoon season.

He also instructed coordination with the Project Implementation Unit in areas where major stormwater drains are being developed under World Bank-funded projects. A clear target must be set for canal cleanliness, and a detailed report should be submitted on the kilometres of canals cleaned, he said.

Warning officials of accountability, he stated that if silt accumulation is found during inspections, the concerned officer will be held directly responsible.

Ramesh further directed that road asphalting works in completed civil project areas must be finished.

# Delegation urges CM to push for 56% SC-ST reservation, Ninth Schedule inclusion

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

A delegation led by former MP and Congress leader V. S. Ugrappa met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and urged the state government to request the Centre to enhance reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to 56 percent and include the Karnataka Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Reservation Bill-2022 in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

The delegation submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister at his official residence, Krishna, seeking constitutional protection for the enhanced reservation policy and legal measures to safeguard it from judicial scrutiny.

According to the petition, the delegation demanded that reservation for Scheduled Castes be increased from 15 percent to 17 percent and reservation for Scheduled Tribes from 3 percent to 7 percent, taking the total reservation percentage to 56 percent.

The memorandum also requested the government to ensure inclusion of the legislation in the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution to provide stronger legal backing against court challenges.

Responding to the delegation, Siddaramaiah reportedly assured them that he would convene an all-party meeting to discuss the matter before leading a delegation of political leaders to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and submit a formal appeal to the Centre.The delegation further

urged the state government to appoint senior advocates to seek removal of the stay order currently pending before the High Court regarding the reservation issue. They also suggested filing a special petition before the Supreme Court if the stay order was not vacated.In a separate demand, the delegation called for an urgent meeting involving representatives and leaders from SC, ST and other backward communities to deliberate on the matter.

The memorandum also sought strict action against individuals allegedly obtaining fake caste certificates and officials accused of issuing such certificates, claiming that fraudulent beneficiaries were depriving genuine SC and ST communities of reservation benefits.

# Workshop on corporate governance and labour law compliance held in Bengaluru

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

A workshop on "Corporate Governance and Labour Law Compliance" was organised by the Bengaluru Management Association in collaboration with the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), Bengaluru Chapter.

The event was inaugurated by Gayithri, Director (Personnel and Vigilance), KSRTC. In her address, she stressed the importance of employee involvement in board-level decision-making processes within organisations. She also noted that the new labour law codes are in the process of implementation and urged participants to actively engage with the reforms to ensure effective execution across workplaces.

Prasanna Kumar Bedi of ICSI highlighted the growing responsibility of company secretaries in strengthening corporate governance systems and ensuring regulatory compliance in organisations of varying sizes.

Vasantharao, Advisor to BMRCL, spoke about the need for restructuring internal organisational policies to support long-term and sustainable institutional growth. He emphasised that governance reforms must align with changing industrial and economic requirements.Tirupal Gorige underlined the broader significance of corporate governance in driving national economic development and improving transparency in business operations.Ram ZK Navarathan presented an overview of the Labour Codes 2025, explaining key changes and their expected impact on corporate functioning, compliance structures, and human resource practices.ND Veeranna Gowda, Director, MDC, and Dr Mohan Das, Programme Chairman, also interacted with participants and addressed queries related to governance frameworks and labour regulations.The workshop witnessed active participation from professionals, including company secretaries from various organisations such as Suma from BESCOM and Sridevi from MSIL. The session received a positive response from attendees and provided practical insights into evolving corporate governance standards and labour law compliance requirements in the current regulatory environment.

## Stampede case: HC permits DNA staff to travel abroad

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

The High Court has permitted two officials of DNA Entertainment Networks Private Limited to travel to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in connection with the ongoing legal proceedings related to the stampede that occurred outside the M Chinnaswamy Stadium during the IPL 2025 victory celebrations.A bench headed by Justice S.R. Krishnakumar passed an interim order allowing Director Sunil Mathew and Senior Event Manager S. Kiran Kumar to travel abroad for business purposes between June 1 and June 10.The court directed the trial court to release their passports, which had been retained as part of bail conditions imposed earlier.

# Abandon shortsighted 'double-decker' projects: MP Tejaswi Surya

**CH NEWS,**BENGALURU

MP Tejaswi Surya has called for the immediate scrapping of what he described as "shortsighted double-decker projects," alleging that they are disrupting Bengaluru's urban fabric and failing to deliver meaningful traffic relief.

In a strongly worded statement, Surya said the projects were designed without adequate scientific study and have ended up turning areas such as Jayanagar into "traffic bottlenecks." He alleged that public money was being spent on what he termed "tunnel and overpass experiments" driven by contractor interests rather than commuter needs.

He urged the government to shift focus away from such infrastructure models and instead invest in strengthening last-mile and end-to-end public transport connectivity. According to him, the city's planning approach must prioritise sustainable mobility rather than short-term engineering interventions.

"Don't make Bengaluru a victim of unscientific experiments," Surya said, while criticising Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar over ongoing urban mobility projects. He also pointed to the Ragigudda flyover, claiming that it has effectively become a "vehicle showroom" due to congestion at entry and exit points.

Questioning the planning logic, he asked whether engineers had accounted for the "bottleneck effect" that occurs when high-capacity flyovers merge into narrow stretches, leading to traffic congestion instead of easing it.

Surya further argued that road widening and flyovers often lead to increased vehicle usage rather than solving congestion. He said strengthening public transport systems should be the primary goal instead of expanding road infrastructure that encourages private vehicle dependency.

He added that Bengaluru should not be turned into a "testing ground for trial-and-error infrastructure projects," asserting that taxpayer money must be used responsibly for long-term urban solutions.

Responding to such concerns earlier, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar had said that the government is considering a 44-km double-decker corridor in the city and is committed to developing Bengaluru in consultation with all stakeholders, including MLAs and opposition leaders.

## Man stabbed to death by friend after fight over mobile phone

**BENGALURU**

A 25-year-old man died after being stabbed by his friend following an argument over a mobile phone in the Marathahalli area.The deceased, Parashurama Ellappa Mangalagati, originally from Hubballi, was working as a housekeeping staff member at a private hospital in Bengaluru along with the accused, Ramu. Both were staying in a rented accommodation near the BESCOM office on Chowdeshwari Road under the Marathahalli police station limits.Police said the incident occurred after Ramu returned home drunk after his night shift and allegedly hid Parashurama's mobile phone. When Parashurama woke up and asked for his phone, an argument broke out between the two.In a fit of rage, Ramu reportedly picked up a kitchen knife and stabbed Parashurama before fleeing the spot with the mobile phone.Neighbours, alerted by the commotion and finding Parashurama severely bleeding, rushed him to a nearby hospital. He was later shifted to Hubballi by his family, where he succumbed to his injuries despite treatment.The Marathahalli police said a complaint was lodged by the deceased's brother Gangappa, following which a case has been registered against the accused.Police have launched a search operation to trace Ramu, who is currently absconding.

SHOCK FOR CONSUMERS

# *No borewell, yet residents billed borewell charges by BWSSB*

**CH NEWS,** BENGALURU

Fresh outrage erupted across Bengaluru after several residents alleged that the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) imposed unfair and confusing charges in monthly water bills, including borewell fees for homes that do not use borewell water.Residents from different parts of the city claimed that the water board was increasing the burden on households through multiple additional charges without providing clear explanations. Many consumers said they were shocked to notice borewell charges despite their borewells either being non-functional or completely absent.Citizens questioned why they were being forced to pay extra amounts apart from regular water usage and meter-related charges. Several residents accused BWSSB of indirectly hiking tariffs by introducing hidden costs instead of openly revising water rates. One resident described the blling pattern as "daylight robbery," saying middle-class families were already struggling with rising living expenses in Bengaluru. Others expressed frustration over repeated meter-related charges despite already paying installation and maintenance costs earlier.

According to one of the bills shared by residents, a household consuming 31,000 litres of water in a month received a total bill of Rs 913. The breakup reportedly included Rs 525 as water usage charges, Rs 75 as meter charges, Rs 263 as sewerage charges and Rs 50 towards borewell charges.

The inclusion of the borewell component triggered widespread criticism, especially from households that depend entirely on Cauvery water supply and no longer possess working borewells.Residents also argued that BWSSB was already among the most expensive urban water utilities in the country and such additional charges were worsening public dissatisfaction. Many consumers demanded that the water board immediately clarify the basis for levying borewell fees and explain how such charges were being calculated. Citizens also urged BWSSB to revise the billing system to ensure residents are not forced to pay for services or facilities they do not use.

## Amazon moves HC seeking quashing of FIR over alleged illegal sale of book

**CH NEWS, BENGALURU**

Amazon has approached the High Court seeking quashing of a criminal case filed against it over allegations of copyright infringement involving the sale of journalist late Ravi Belagere's book Heli Hogu Karana on its platform at discounted prices.

Justice M.G.S. Kamal, who heard the criminal petition filed by Amazon Seller Services Private Limited, adjourned the matter after directing the High Court registry to rectify procedural objections raised in the petition.

The case stems from a complaint alleging that the book, originally authored by Ravi Belagere and first published in September 2003, was being sold online at significantly lower prices without authorisation. The 31st reprint of the book was reportedly released in April 2005.

According to the complaint, the copyright of the work rests exclusively with Bhavana Prakashan, owned by Bhavana Belagere, who holds the sole legal rights for printing, distribution and sale of the book.

QUICK READ

## Gadag warns illegal homestays, resorts

**CH NEWS,** Gadag
The district administration has warned that unauthorized homestays and resorts operating without approval from the Tourism Department must immediately stop their activities in Gadag district. Officials said ma ny such establishments are functioning without proper registration or permission. Owners who wish to continue legally have been asked to contact the Assistant Director of the Tourism Department and complete the required registration process with proper documents. The District Collector, who is also the chairman of the District Touris m Development Commit tee, said strict legal action will be taken against violators found continuing illegal operations without approval in the district as per rules.

## Health minister to visit Hunsur today

**CH NEWS,** Hunsur
Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao is scheduled to visit Hunsur city on Thur sday (today). During the visit, he will inspect the newly constructed 100-bed government hospital at 10 am. Officials said the inspection will review the progress and readiness of the hospital for public use.
Later at 10:30 am, the minister will inaugurate the newly built Apollo Hos pital in the city. State Guar antee Implementation Committee Vice President Dr. Pushpa Amarnath is expected to attend the event. Former MLA HP Manjunath, a close associate of the mini ster, will also be present during the programmes, according to organisers.

## Hemareddy Mallamma Jayanti observed in Hunsur

**CH NEWS,** Hunsur
The Hemareddy Mallamma Jayanti was celebrated in the auditorium of the Deputy Divisional Officer's office in Hunsur under the leadership of the taluk administration. The event was held in the presence of several dignitaries. Speaking on the occasion, Tahsildar Manjunath said Hemareddy Mallamma was an example of devotion and loyalty, and she supported the poor through her charitable acts. He added that her life message of equality remains relevant even today. Other speakers also highlighted her contributions to society. Officials and local representatives including Sripada Rajeshwari, Vasegowda, and D. Kumar Jayaram were present during the programme.

# Nikhil Kumaraswamy challenges CM, predicts NDA win in 2028

### Nikhil Kumaraswamy predicted NDA government in Karnataka 2028, confident JD(S) will surpass its 2004 seat performance

**MYSURU**

Janata Dal (Secular) youth leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy launched a sharp political attack on Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a party event in Varuna constituency, claiming that political history would have been different if former Prime Minister H. D. Deve Gowda had not allowed Siddaramaiah to present a budget in his early political career.

Speaking at a Janata Dal (Secular) public function in Mellahalli, Nikhil said Siddaramaiah, who rose politically from the JD(S), was now speaking lightly about the party that shaped his career.

He challenged the Chief Minister directly and said he would contest him in Varuna constituency.

Nikhil Kumaraswamy also predicted that the National Democratic Alliance would form the government in Karnataka in 2028 with a stronger mandate. He claimed the JD(S) had earlier won 58 seats in 2004 and expressed confidence that the party would surpass that performance in the future elections.

He accused the Congress government of weakening welfare commitments and alleged that funds meant for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe development under SCP and TSP schemes were being diverted to guarantee programmes. He also raised concerns over state finances and said rising debt levels were a serious issue.

Nikhil further claimed that farmer distress and suicides had increased in recent years and said the government had failed to address rural economic challenges. He contrasted this with earlier loan waiver initiatives implemented during JD(S) rule under H. D. Kumaraswamy, saying those measures supported lakhs of farmer families.

He also criticised political leaders who, according to him, left JD(S) after gaining power and said loyal workers were the strength of the party. Party leaders present at the event supported his remarks and participated in the meeting.

The speech turned into a strong political exchange between JD(S) and Congress leaders, with Nikhil asserting that public support would shift in favour of JD(S) and its allies in the coming years. He concluded by expressing confidence that a pro-people NDA government would come to power in Karnataka after the 2028 elections.

## Dange Education Society to celebrate sixth anniversary event

**HAVERI**

Dange Education Society will celebrate its 6th annual programme at Sri Siddharameshwar Sabhabhavan near PB Road, Nagar, on Friday at 11 am. The event includes lighting ceremony, cultural programmes and an art felicitation function. Religious leaders Sadashiva Mahaswamiji and Gnana Prakasha Swamiji will grace the occasion. Public Works Minister Satish Jarkiholi will inaugurate the programme. Society chairman Dr Sanjay G Dange will preside. Social Welfare Minister Dr H C Mahadevappa will attend as special invitee. In-charge Minister Sivananda Patil, along with MLAs Rudrappa Lamani, Basavaraja Shivannavara, Prasada Abbayya and other leaders, will participate.

## Supreme Court orders restoration of Mysuru heritage buildings

**MYSURU**

Expressing immense happiness over the Supreme Court verdict directing the restoration and renovation of the historic Lansdowne Building and Devaraja Market Building in Mysuru, Pramoda Devi Wadiyar, a member of Mysore Royal Family, has wholeheartedly welcomed the judgment and termed it a major victory for heritage conservation.

In a statement, she recalled that during the earlier tenure of the present Deputy Commissioner G. Lakshmikanth Reddy, when he served as Corporation Commissioner, detailed discussions had taken place regarding the restoration of the Devaraja Market. She said that through the His Highness Srikantadatta Narasimharaja Wadiyar Foundation, she had even volunteered to restore a portion of the market as a demonstration project to prove that the structure could be revived using traditional materials and methods originally employed in its construction. However, the proposal could not move forward due to the pending litigation.

Pramoda Devi Wadiyar urged the Government of Karnataka not to entrust the restoration work to the PWD. Instead, the responsibility may be given to a specialised heritage conservation organisation with proven expertise in restoring historic structures. The agency selected should also be entrusted with maintaining the buildings for at least five years after completion to ensure accountability and long-term preservation.

Highlighting the importance of the two iconic structures, she noted that the Lansdowne Building possesses immense commercial potential owing to its prime location, while the Devaraja Market represents one of the earliest models of what is today recognised as the modern mall concept.

She further expressed happiness that the legal battle had ultimately been pursued in the interest of safeguarding these culturally and historically significant landmarks for future generations.

## BJP seeks action against KPCC spokesperson over Voters' list remarks

**MYSURU**

State BJP spokesperson M. G. Mahesh demanded that a case be registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) against KPCC spokesperson M. Lakshman for allegedly speaking in favour of illegal immigrants residing in Mysuru.

Addressing a press conference in the city on Wednesday, he urged the authorities to initiate legal action against Lakshman and arrest him for claiming that the names of 42,000 Muslims had been deleted from the voters' list in the Udayagiri area under the Narasimharaja Assembly constituency. But these are "false and baseless" allegations.

Mahesh said the State Government officials were currently engaged in voter mapping work and clarified that the Election Commission of India had no role in the process. The Special Intensive Revision (SIR) was conducted in 2002 and that year had been fixed as the cut-off year for enrolment in the electoral roll. People without valid documents must establish their citizenship by producing proper records.

Claiming that the SIR process was yet to commence in Karnataka, Mahesh questioned how Lakshman could allege deletion of 42,000 Muslim voters in Udayagiri even before the exercise began. The State Government and concerned authorities must take serious note of the statement, register cases against Lakshman and send him to jail.

In fact, the highest number of deletions had taken place in Gujarat, while 94 lakh names were recently removed in West Bengal. The former minister and Kerala MP Shashi Tharoor and several other leaders had welcomed the SIR exercise as a step towards cleansing the voters' list.

Referring to the recent Assembly election results in five States, Mahesh said the outcome clearly indicated that voters in Karnataka would reject the ruling Congress government. Fearing defeat, the Congress party was now demanding ballot papers instead of EVMs for the forthcoming GBA polls and opposing the SIR process.

## Mysore Travel Mart 2026 to be Held from June 5 to 7 at JCAC

**MYSURU**

The fifth edition of "GRS Fantasy Park Presents Mysore Travel Mart 2026" will be held from June 5 to 7 at the Jagannath Centre for Art and Culture (JCAC) in Vijayanagar, Mysuru.

The three-day tourism event is being organised by the Mysore Travels Association in association with the Union Tourism Department, Karnataka Tourism Department, Mysore Hotel Owners Association, Skoll International Mysore and several other organisations.

The event will be inaugurated on June 5 at 11 am by Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. State Tourism Minister H. K. Patil, Mysuru District In-charge Minister H. C. Mahadevappa, Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar and Chamaraja MLA K. Harish Gowda will participate in the inaugural ceremony along with office-bearers of various organisations. On June 6 morning, panel discussions will be organised on topics such as "Media and Tourism", "Film City in Mysore" and "Tourism and Sustainable Development", featuring senior journalists, noted film actors and actresses from Mysuru and experts in sustainable tourism.

Later in the evening, "Skoll International's Mysore Tourism and Hospitality Award Night" will be held, during which 15 awards will be presented to hotels, resorts, tourism professionals and individuals contributing directly and indirectly to the growth of tourism in Mysuru. The valedictory ceremony will take place on June 7.

More than 100 stalls will remain open from 10 am to 8 pm on all three days. Exhibitors from Mysuru, Kodagu, Jaipur, Rajasthan, Kerala, Bhubaneswar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, besides international tourism participants, are expected to take part in the mart.

Over 250 hosted buyers from across the country are also expected to attend. The organisers said the event aims to strengthen Karnataka's tourism sector and further establish Mysuru as a prominent destination on India's tourism map. Around 10, 000 visitors are expected duri ng the three-day event and entry will be free for the public.

## Ballari issues order for compulsory hostel registration

**BALLARI**

Deputy Commissioner Nagendra Prasad has instructed that all government, non-government and aided hostels operating for chil dren aged six to eighteen years in the district must register compulsorily. The order follows the implementation of the Guidelines for Procedures of Hostels 2025 issued by the government. He said registration is mandatory within two months from the date of notification. Government hostels should apply through respective departmental district officers. Non-government and aided hostels must submit applications to the Deputy Director of the Women and Child Development Department. Applications must be submitted in Sample-1 format as per Guidelines 2025. For more information, people can contact the Deputy Director office or District Child Protection Unit.

*The MP said PM-ABHIM strengthens health infrastructure by building specialty and critical care units, including new centres*

## PM-ABHIM Critical Care Centre to boost Mysuru healthcare: MP Yaduveer

**MYSURU**

Mysuru-Kodagu Lok Sabha member Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar said that the upcoming 50-bed Critical Care Centre in Mysuru under the PM-ABHIM scheme will significantly strengthen healthcare infrastructure in the region while preserving the historic importance of the Krishnarajammanni Sanatorium premises in Mysuru on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters, he said the land was originally dedicated in memory of Princess Krishnarajammanni, who had died of tuberculosis. Following her death, the Maharaja had established the Krishnarajammanni Sanatorium for tuberculosis treatment at the site.

Over the decades, several governments expanded healthcare facilities there, resulting in the development of a major hospital and related medical infrastructure.

The MP said the Central Government's PM-ABHIM

scheme aims at strengthening health infrastructure through the construction of specialty and critical care units. Similar tertiary and specialty care centres are also being established in Virajpet and Madikeri in Kodagu district.

Stating that the Mysuru project would greatly support the existing healthcare system, Yaduveer said the work is progressing with equal emphasis on speed and quality. The additional facilities such as another lift and an external ramp had been requested, and a fresh report has been sought to enable further proposals to be sent to the Centre.

The project consists of a 50-bed specialty critical care centre that will benefit not only Mysuru but also surrounding districts. Under the PM-ABHIM scheme, funds are allocated to districts for infrastructure creation, following which proposals are forwarded by the State Government to the Centre based on local requirements. He further stated that the chosen location was well suited for the project and expressed confidence that the work would likely be completed within six months.

Asked about the proposal to convert the old DC office into a museum, the MP clarified that the proposal has not yet been officially approved as concerns had already been raised regarding the present DPR and stressed that Mysuru's rich history deserves a world-class museum plan rather than a "cut-and-paste" approach.

Mysuru's heritage and cultural identity must be reflected properly in the DPR, he said, adding that all stakeholders were united in ensuring that the city gets a museum befitting its historical stature.

NEET QUESTION PAPER LEAK

## *Youth Congress, AIDSO hold separate protests in City*

**MYSURU**

Protests were staged in the city by Youth Congress workers and members of the AIDSO condemning the alleged leak of the NEET examination question paper and demanding strict action against those responsible, in Mysuru on Wednesday.

Youth Congress activists attempted to lay siege to the office of Mysuru-Kodagu MP Yaduveer Krishnadatta Chamaraja Wadiyar located at the MUDA office premises. Alleging that the question paper leak before the conduct of the exam-

ination reflected the failure of the Central Government, the protesters gathered near the main entrance of the CADA office and raised slogans. During the protest, the activists attempted to march towards the MP's office, but police personnel deployed at the spot stop ped them by placing barrica des. The protesters then staged a sit-in demonstration on the road. Police later detained the demonstrators and shifted them in vehicles. Youth Congress leader Hoysala and several others participated in the protest.

AIDSO protest

Meanwhile, the All India Democratic Students Organisation (AIDSO) staged a separate protest near the old Deputy Commissioner's office demanding exemplary punishment for those responsible for the NEET question paper leak and calling for the abolition of the National Testing Agency (NTA). Addressing the protesters, district secretary Nithin said the repeated incidents of NEET question paper leaks were not merely the failure of an examination agency, but a grave injustice to lakhs of sincere students and their dreams. He alleged that within just three years, the aspirations of students seeking medical education had once again been "auctioned off to the highest bidders." Nithin charged that the National Testing Agency was functioning like a puppet in the hands of the coaching mafia, exposing the deteriorating condition of the education system.

## Karnataka launches manuscript digitisation project drive

**VIJAYAPURA**

Under the Central Government Jnana Bharatam Mission Project the Karnataka Archaeology Museums and Heritage Depart ment along with the Tourism Department has initiated a lar ge scale survey and digitisation of ancient manuscripts across the state officials said at a district level committee meeti ng chaired by the Additional Deputy Commissioner in Vijayapura on May 13 2026 the project aims to preserve centuries old handwritten texts historical records and rare documents by creating a national digital platform for public access. Officials said the scheme includes survey preservation conservation registration critical editing mobile publishing and uploading data through a central application lin ked to a national repository system district coordinators have been appointed to identify manuscripts in temples mosques edu cational institutions libraries and private collections officials appe aled to citizens to share information about rare documents and support documentation work they said awareness programmes will be conducted to protect cultural heritage and ensure systematic digitisation across Karnataka.

# Cheluvarayaswamy inaugurates new healthcare units in Mandya

The minister said Shishu Sanjeevini aims to reduce infant mortality, improve newborn care, and prioritise maternal-child health

**MANDYA**

District in-charge Minister and Agriculture Minister N. Cheluvarayaswamy said that the state government has taken several steps over the past three years to improve public healthcare services and strengthen mother and child welfare systems in Mandya district.

He inaugurated newly established Midwifery-Based Care Unit and Mother Milk Collection Centre under the "Shishu Sanjeevini" initiative at the District Hospital, implemented jointly by the District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Institute of Medical Sciences

(MIMS), and the Health and Family Welfare Department.

The minister said the Shishu Sanjeevini programme has been launched with the aim of reducing infant mortality and improving newborn care, especially for premature and malnourished babies. He stressed that protecting the health of mothers and children is a top priority for the government.

He added that mother's breast milk is the most important nutrition for infants and awareness should be created among families about its benefits. The newly set up milk collection centre will help ensure safe feeding support for newborns in need of medical care. Officials said the initiative is a major step in strengthening neonatal healthcare in the district. The minister appreciated the efforts of the district administration and health department in establishing the facility and said it will help improve survival rates of newborns.

Zilla Panchayat Chief Executive Officer K.R. Nandini said maternal and child health indicators are directly linked to overall development. She noted that each case of maternal or infant death is reviewed in detail with expert medical reports to identify causes and prevent future incidents.

She said the Shishu Sanjeevini scheme has been introduced to ensure that no preventable deaths occur among mothers and infants in the district. Officials and doctors present at the event highlighted the importance of early intervention and proper nutrition for newborns.

The event was attended by local MLAs, District Collector Dr. Kumar, MIMS Director Narasimhaswamy, MUDA President Prakash, and other senior officials, who expressed support for the initiative aimed at strengthening healthcare infrastructure in Mandya.

## Advance ration distribution brings relief to Kodagu families

**MADIKERI**

The Central Government has directed states to pre-lift and distribute food grains for May and June 2026 together under the National Food Security Act due to procurement season and storage challenges. In Kodagu district, ration distribution for both months will be completed in May itself. Officials said An tyodaya ration card holders will receive 70 kg rice (35 kg for May and 35 kg for June) free of cost. Priority Household or BPL beneficiaries will receive 10 kg rice (5 kg for May and 5 kg for June). Beneficiaries are required to complete biomet ric authentication for both months during distribution. Authorities have also included additional rice under the state's Annabhagya scheme, which will be distributed along with the NFSA quota.

## Pratibha Puraskar applications invited for students

**CH NEWS,** Chitradurga
The District Madiga Employees Cultural Association has invited applications for Pratibha Puraskar awards for meritorious students from the Madiga community in Chitradurga district. The award will recognise SSLC and PUC students who have scored high marks in the 2025–26 academic year. Eligible PUC students must have secured above 90 percent and SSLC students above 85 percent. Officials said the last date to apply is May 30. The award ceremony will be held in the second week of June 2026. Applicants must submit mark sheets, Aadhaar, caste certificate and photographs.

## Divisional Post Adalat scheduled on May 20

**CH NEWS,** Chitradurga
The Chitradurga Post Divisional Adalat will be held on May 20 at 3 pm at the Post Superintendent's Office near Filter House, Kamanabavi locality on Kote Road in Chitradurga city. Officials said the session aims to address complaints and suggestions related to postal services in the division. Residents have been requested to submit their grievances or feedback to the office before May 20 for necessary action. The Superintendent of Posts, KR Usha, said that the Adalat will help resolve service-related issues and improve efficiency in postal operations across the Chitradurga postal division as part of public service improvement efforts.

## Tobacco crackdown hits Gaudihalli village shops

**CH NEWS,** Chitradurga
A sudden tobacco control operation was conducted in Gaudihalli village of Holalkere taluk by the district health department on Tuesday. A raid was carried out to stop tobacco sales and protect young people from addiction and health risks. Officials said the operation was based on complaints from the public about illegal tobacco selling in shops. During inspection, teams checked several shops and found violations under the Kotpa 2003 Act. Fines were collected on the spot from offenders and warnings were issued to shop owners. They were instructed to display mandatory war ning boards under Sections 4, 6A and 6B of the law.

*Speakers criticised exam system, citing student stress, unfair entrance tests, costly coaching, and inequality in higher education access*

# SFI stages protest over NEET-UG irregularities in Haveri

**HAVERI**

Students belonging to the Students Federation of India (SFI) staged a protest in Haveri demanding a fair investigation into alleged irregularities in the NEET-UG examination conducted on May 3, 2026. The protest was held in front of the statue of Mylar Mahadevappa in the city, where participants raised slogans against the National Testing Agency (NTA) and the Central Government.

SFI district leaders alleged that repeated complaints regarding question paper leak claims and examination transparency had raised serious concerns among students across the country. They demanded that the NEET-UG examination be cancelled and a thorough inquiry be conducted under the supervision of an independent judicial committee appointed by the Supreme Court. They also called for strict action against those responsible if any malpractice is proven.

Speakers at the protest said the current examination system is causing mental stress among students and questioned the fairness of national-level entrance tests. They alleged that rising coaching expenses have made competitive exams difficult for students from poor and middle-class backgrounds, leading to inequality in access to higher education opportunities.

SFI representatives further stated that the National Testing Agency has been facing repeated criticism over examination conduct and transparency issues. They urged the government to ensure accountability and protect students' educational rights.

District SFI leaders including Krishna Nayaka, Raghu Angadi, Sasikala Doddamani, Nand Chech, Sinchana Mallannavara, Saraswati Talwar, Lalita Pujar, Tejaswini Malapur, Bhagyashree Patil and others participated in the demonstration. The protesters concluded by demanding reforms in the examination system to ensure fairness, transparency and equal opportunity for all students in future national-level entrance tests.

# Immediate implementation sought for Women's Reservation Act

**BENGALURU**

The National Coalition for Women's Reservation–Karnataka held a press conference on Wednesday, demanding the immediate implementation of the Women's Reservation Act without linking it to the Census or delimitation process.

The coalition condemned the delay in operationalizing 33 percent reservation for women in Parliament and State Assemblies, calling it a violation of women's constitutional right to equal political representation.

Coalition members said the demand for women's reservation is the result of decades of struggle by women across India for an inclusive and representative democracy. While the passage of the 2023 Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam was initially welcomed as a historic step, they argued that the conditions attached to its implementation have delayed women's political participation indefinitely. The coalition stated that repeated discussions on women's empowerment are meaningless without laws to support them. They said linking reservation to the Census and delimitation process is being used as a reason to delay implementation rather than as a democratic necessity. The coalition also highlighted ongoing efforts such as petitions and public campaigns to build support for the Women's Reservation Act. Women's rights activists and representatives of various organizations appealed to the media, civil society groups, and citizens to support the immediate enforcement of the Act to ensure equal political representation for women across India.

The coalition has demanded that the government implement the long-pending 33 percent reservation for women in Parliament without further delay. They urged that all conditions and procedural hurdles that are currently preventing its implementation be removed immediately.

# Technology push for waste management in Bengaluru South

**BENGALURU**

Bengaluru South City Corporation Commissioner K.N. Ramesh held a direct interaction with residents of HSR Layout and said the civic body is considering greater use of technology to improve solid waste management in the area.

The Commissioner met residents, welfare associations, and civic representatives to hear concerns related to waste collection, tree cutting waste, and disposal of construction and demolition debris. He said citizen feedback will be used to improve service delivery and strengthen urban cleanliness systems.

Residents suggested strengthening the door-to-door waste collection system and improving scientific segregation of waste at source. They also raised concerns about illegal dumping of construction waste on roadsides and vacant plots, calling for strict enforcement.

Officials assured that action will be taken against violators and that designated disposal sites will be used more effectively to prevent unauthorized dumping across the locality.

The meeting also discussed eco-friendly handling of green waste generated from tree pruning in parks and roadside maintenance. Officials were instructed to ensure safe and planned tree trimming, especially ahead of the monsoon season.

Commissioner Ramesh emphasized the need for technology integration in civic services. He proposed GPS tracking of waste collection vehicles, use of mobile applications, and digital dashboards to monitor performance and improve transparency in operations.He also announced plans for a "Citizen Rating" system, where residents can evaluate cleanliness levels and the responsiveness of sanitation staff in their areas. He said the feedback system would help identify low-performing zones and enable quick corrective action.

A special monitoring team headed by the Bommanahalli Zone Joint Commissioner will be formed to oversee door-to-door waste collection, attendance of sanitation workers, and removal of black spots in HSR Layout.

The Commissioner added that all suggestions from residents will be reviewed and incorporated into future planning to build a cleaner and more sustainable Bengaluru.

# 5 lakh saplings drive launched in Chikkaballapur

**CHIKKABALLAPUR**

State Consumer Disputes Commission Chairman T.G. Shivashankar Gowda said that citizens must not only enjoy constitutional rights but also fulfill their duties, especially in protecting the environment.

He spoke after participating in a large tree plantation programme at Muddenahalli, the birthplace of Sir M. Visve varaya, where officials laun ched a drive to plant five lakh saplings across the district.

The programme is being jointly implemented by the district administration, judiciary, forest department, and social forestry department with the aim of improving green cover and protecting natural resources.

Gowda said the Constitution, shaped by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, clearly highlights citizens' responsibility towards environmental protection. He stressed that planting trees is not just an activity but a duty towards future generations.

Officials said the initiative will continue during the monsoon season, with saplings planted at multiple locations including memorial areas and government land. They added that maintaining the planted saplings for at least three years is essential for survival and long-term environmental benefits. Principal District and Sessions Judge T.P. Ramalingegowda said the state legal services authority is actively supporting environmental conservation programmes and aims to promote large-scale plantation activities across Karnataka.

**Officials said the initiative will continue in monsoon with sapling planting at multiple sites, stressing three-year maintenance for survival and long-term environmental benefits**

He said similar programmes are being conducted in educational institutions and rural areas to spread awareness about environmental protection and climate balance. District Collector G. Prabhu said the administration has made full preparations to plant five lakh saplings this year and ensure their survival through regular monitoring. He added that survival rate of saplings will be reviewed monthly to improve effectiveness. Officials said the plantation drive will also help improve groundwater levels and support ecological balance in the district. They urged citizens, NGOs, and local organisations to actively participate in nurturing the planted saplings.

District Bar Association President Abhilash said tree plantation is essential to prevent drought, maintain rainfall balance, and protect the environment for future generations. Judicial officers, police officials, and representatives of various departments participated in the programme and stres sed collective responsibility in making the initiative a success across Chikkaballapur district.

**TORA VILLAGE FESTIVAL**

# *Arebhashe Utsav highlights language and culture push*

**MADIKERI**

The "Arebhashe Ghadinada Utsav" was held at Tora village in Virajpet taluk, focusing on the preservation and promotion of Arebhashe language, culture, and traditions. The programme was organised by the Karnataka Arebhashe Culture and Literature Academy in collaboration with local cultural associations.

Virajpet MLA and Chief Minister's legal adviser A. S. Ponnanna said the government has reserved six acres of land near Madenadu for the development of the Kodava Gowda community and sanctioned ₹1 crore for constructing a new Gowda Samaj building in Bhaga mandala. He said the commitments made by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister have been fulfilled and that the government remains committed to the development of all communities. He highlighted that cultural academies are actively taking programmes to rural and border regions, which helps preserve language, literature, and heritage. Ponnanna said Arebhashe is a unique semi-language with deep cultural roots in Kodagu and surrounding regions.

He stressed that language preservation must begin within families and communities, adding that protecting language also protects identity and heritage. He further said that unity, brotherhood, and harmony among communities are essential for social development. He noted that food habits, traditions, and cultural practices of the region are distinct and must be preserved with pride.

Academy president Sadananda Mavaji said the institution has been organising border festivals and village festivals in several locations including Sulya and Madikeri taluks to spread awareness about Arebhashe culture. He said efforts are being made to publish books and quarterly magazines to strengthen literary activities.

## Journalists Cooperative launches membership drive in Kolar

**KOLAR**

The Kolar and Chikkaballapur District Working Journalists Multipurpose Cooperative Society has started a share collection and membership drive for working journalists, said Society president K S Ganesh and vice president Abbani Shankar.

The Kolar and Chikkaballapur District Working Journalists Multipurpose Cooperative Society has started a share collection and membership drive for working journalists, said Society president K S Ganesh and vice president Abbani Shankar. According to the release, interested journalists can enroll by submitting one passport-size photograph, a copy of Aadhaar card and a membership fee of 2250 rupees. Application forms are available at the Press Club buil ding and can be submitted dur ing office hours. The Society has appealed to working journalis ts across the district to enroll in large numbers and take part in its activities and development initiatives. Office bearers also clarified that journalists who are already members of the Kolar and Chikkaballapur District Working Journalists Multipurpose Cooperative Society will not be eligible to join another cooperative society.

## QUICK READ

### Free bladder check-up camp Announced

**CH NEWS,** Chitradurga
A free bladder health check-up camp will be held on May 16 at Chitradurga District Hospital in collaboration with S.S. Narayana Health Hospital, Davangere, in Room No. 15 of the district hospital. Officials said urology specialist Dr. U.S. Karthik will be available from 10 am to 1 pm to conduct examinations. The camp will provide consultation for problems such as kidney stones, frequent urination, prostate issues, urinary infections, burning sensation, blood in urine, male infertility and urinary blockage. Medical Superintendent Dr. S.P. Ravindra said citizens can contact 9535025743 or 7259759982 for more information about the free health service camp.

### Chikkaballapura seeks private tube wells on rent

**CH NEWS,** Chikkaballapura
Shidlaghatta Municipal Council has requested private tube well owners in the city to provide their wells on a monthly rental basis to support drinking water supply during the summer season. Officials said the groundwater level has fallen, creating pressure on the existing water system. The municipality plans to use privately owned tube wells to ensure uninterrupted drinking water supply within city limits. Interested owners have been requested to hand over their tube wells to the municipal council for public use on a rental agreement basis. Authorities said this step is necessary to meet rising water demand.

### Madikeri announces planned power supply disruption

**CH NEWS,** Madikeri
Quarterly maintenance work will be carried out on multiple power distribution substations in Kodagu district on May 15 from 10 am to 5 pm, leading to fluctuations and interruptions in electricity supply across several areas. Officials said maintenance will be taken up at Kushalnagar 220/66/11 KV, 66/11 KV Suntikoppa and Madapura substations, affecting regions including Kushalnagar town, Kudige, Hebbale, Shirangala, Kushalnagar industrial area, and nearby villages. Power supply variations will also be seen in Somwarpet town and surrounding areas served by Aalur Siddapura and Hanagallu substations. The Electricity Department urged residents to cooperate during the scheduled maintenance work.

# Scholarship applications invited for Hunsur students

*Progressive Mining Forum Hunsur invites applications for Pratibha Puraskar scholarships scheme*

**HUNSUR**

The Progressive Mining Forum of Hunsur Taluk has invited applications for the Pratibha Puraskar and scholarship scheme for students of the Ganiga community who have secured more than 70 percent marks in SSLC and PUC examinations. The initiative aims to encourage academic achievement among students from both rural and urban areas of the taluk.

According to forum representatives, students who have passed SSLC and PUC in their first attempt from State, CBSE, or ICSE boards are eligible to apply. Students who have completed higher education will also be felicitated under the programme. Applicants are required to submit a Xerox copy of their Aadhaar card and attested marks cards verified by the respective school headmaster or principal along with their application.

The last date for submission of applications is May 25, organisers said.

Forum General Secretary Prasad urged eligible students and parents to make use of the opportunity and apply within the deadline. He said the programme is intended to support meritorious students and promote higher education within the community.

For further information, applicants may contact forum office bearers including President Manukumar, Legal Advisor Puttashetti, Honorary President Ramesh, Treasurer V. Mahadev, and others via the provided contact numbers.

The organisers also announced the formation of the Hunsur Taluk Progressive Miners Forum, with Nanjapura Manukumar elected as president and Shivjyoti Nagar Prasad as general secretary.

Other office bearers have been appointed, and additional committee members are expected to be selected in the coming days.

The forum stated that the scholarship initiative will continue in future years to support deserving students and encourage educational progress in the taluk.

## Raichur Hatti Hospital panel demands urgent fixes

**HATTI**

A meeting of the Hatti Gold Mine Company Hospital Improvement Committee was held at the hospital office on Wednesday to discuss better health services for workers and families. Members discussed several problems faced by patients and suggested urgent steps to improve treatment quality and hospital facilities.

Major demands included appointment of permanent physician and cardiologist, setting up an intensive care unit, and buying an ambulance with ventilator support.

They also asked for clean hospital environment, good medicines, nutritious food, and free ambulance service for workers' families.

Other requests included separate referral treatment for families, better scanning facilities, hot water in wards, dining hall, and waiting shade for patients. Union representatives demanded risk allowance for nurses and contract staff, rest rooms for drivers, and installation of RO water filters. Hospital officials said they will forward the demands to higher authorities for consideration and possible approval soon.

Committee members stressed that improving hospital infrastructure is important for providing timely treatment to mine workers and their families in Hatti region and said that essential services like ICU emergency care diagnostic facilities ambulance support and sanitation must be strengthened without delay they also urged management to ensure regular availability of specialist doctors and improve working conditions for medical staff so that patients do not face difficulties during treatment and the hospital can function efficiently with better coordination and accountability in future operations.

## Funeral of actor Dileep Raj held in Gunnur

**RAMANAGARA**

The funeral of Dileep Raj, a popular actor and producer, was held according to Lingayat tradition at a farmhouse in Gunnur near Rmanagar taluk. He often visited the farmhouse during free time and had built a traditional style house there and maintained close relations with villagers. Before the final rites, puja was performed by his elder brother's son under the guidance of Rajashekar Swamiji of Revanasiddheshwar Math.

Several film and television personalities including Srujan Lokesh, Anu Prabhakar, Raghu Mukherjee, Jagappa and others attended the funeral along with villagers. His family members were deeply shocked as they paid their last respects.

He was known for his roles in films and serials and had acted in twenty eight films including Sugreeva, U Turn and others. He gained popularity through television serial Hitler Kalyana and was also producing the serial Krishna Rukku.

He also acted in serials like Kanjeendu Turu Darbu, Rath Saptami and Preethi Tagi. Colleagues said his contribution to Kannada cinema and television will be remembered for years.

Fans and co-actors expressed grief and said he was a humble artist who connected well with people and left a strong mark in entertainment industry.

*Mandali said limited medical seats force students abroad; NEET controversies persist; over 23 lakh candidates compete annually for few government and private medical seats.*

# Mandali question transparency in medical entrance exams system

**GADAG**

Gadag District Congress Campaign Committee President Ashoka Mandali has accused the Bharatiya Janata Party of destroying the dreams of medical students after alleged irregularities in the NEET UG 2026 examination.

In a press release, he said the National Testing Agency cancelled the exam, affecting 22.7 lakh students across India. Leaders alleged that a paper leak led to arrests in Rajasthan and raised concerns about fairness and transparency. They questioned the government's handling of repeated exam leaks and said students are losing trust in the system.

The leader also said millions go abroad for medical education due to limited seats and rising competition in India. In past years, controversies over NEET results, grace marks, and court cases have raised doubts about the exam process. Officials say over 23 lakh students appear annually while only a small number secure medical seats in government and private colleges. Students from India also travel to countries like Georgia, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan for affordable medical studies. Mandali demanded strict action and said the issue reflects wider problems in national examination systems and governance. The controversy has triggered political debate between parties over education policy, student safety and exam reforms. Authorities continue to investigate the alleged leak while students and parents wait for clarity on admissions. Experts say repeated leaks damage trust and highlight the need for stronger security in national level examinations. Students' future remains uncertain as authorities review the situation and consider possible reforms in testing systems.

Political leaders continue to exchange allegations while families express concern over education stability and fairness. Overall, the incident has raised nationwide attention on medical entrance examinations and their integrity. Officials and leaders are expected to meet soon to discuss solutions and restore confidence among students and parents.

*Lakshmiopriya directed removal of dangerous trees near educational institutions and inspection of bridges for monsoon safety*

## Collector Lakshmiopriya issues monsoon safety precautions

**KARWAR**

District Collector K. Lakshmiopriya has asked people to take strong precautions during the monsoon season to prevent landslides and other rain related dangers in Uttara Kannada district. She said that officials and staff are fully prepared to handle any emergency situations during heavy rains.

At a District Disaster Management Authority meeting held at the Collector's office in Karwar on Wednesday, she reviewed monsoon preparedness and issued several safety instructions to departments. She directed all tahsildar offices and urban local bodies to open 24x7 control rooms so that public problems can be addressed quickly during the rainy season.

She instructed the police, fire, forest, electricity, and BSNL departments to remain on alert and coordinate through the District Emergency Operations Center. She also asked the Public Works Department to complete road repair works this month and ensure proper drainage so that rainwater does not collect on roads.

The Collector said that warning boards and barricades must be placed in dangerous areas on highways. She also ordered officials to complete dredging work in Shirur and other flood prone areas to prevent waterlogging.

Lakshmiopriya asked departments to clear dangerous trees near schools, colleges, and anganwadis. She warned that officials will be held responsible if accidents occur due to negligence. She also directed inspection of bridges to check their safety during heavy rains.

HESCOM was told to keep emergency equipment, vehicles, and staff ready for quick response during power failures. Fire department officials were instructed to ensure all rescue equipment is available and functional.

Officials said 1,780 risky trees have already been identified in the district and action will be taken soon. Rain gauges across the district will be repaired and checked for accurate monitoring of rainfall levels.

The Collector said all officers must work together and respond quickly to public needs during emergencies. A 24x7 helpline number 94835 11015 has been set up for assistance. She urged citizens to stay alert and contact authorities immediately in case of danger during monsoon.

Residents are advised to follow official updates and avoid risky travel in landslide prone areas during heavy rainfall periods immediately.

## Youth dominate Uttara Kannada social body elections

**BHATKAL**

In the triennial elections of Majlis-e-Islahva Tanzeem, a major social organization of Uttara Kannada district, youth played a dominant role as more than 50 percent new members were elected to the executive committee. Voting was held in eight constituencies across Bhatkal on May 12 and 24 members were elected directly while 20 members were elected unopposed from seven constituencies.

There was intense competition in the 14th constituency where 10 candidates contested for five seats and polling at Alfalah Sports Center in Kargadde recorded 75.43 percent turnout. The election process for selecting members to the 132-member executive committee from various parts of Bhatkal has now been completed successfully. Election Commissioner Mohiddin Altaf Kharuri said that the large number of new members in the executive committee has brought new enthusiasm and energy to the organization.

## Latha Mallikarjuna launches 5 crore road project works

**HARAPANAHALLI**

MLA Latha Mallikarjuna said that development of villages depends on better road connectivity in Harapanahalli constituency. She spoke after performing bhoomi puja at Jambulinganahalli village for road works worth five crore rupees from Davangere taluk border to Kanchikere village. She said priority is given to main roads connecting taluk centre and goal is to make constituency a model constituency.

The CC road on Lakshmipur Kanchikere route will be asphalted widened and developed. She added that village connectivity will improve overall development of rural areas. She urged contractors to prioritise quality work without discrimination and ensure timely completion. Local leaders Shanthakumar Reddy Kanchikere Jayalakshmi Mattur Basavaraj Bidri Sunil Kumar Kuberappa engineers and contractors were present. Officials said road development projects are expected to improve transport access for farmers students and daily commuters in the region.

MLA said that her focus is on balanced development across all villages in the constituency and ensuring basic infrastructure reaches every habitated area. She said that improved roads will boost education health services and local economy in rural pockets of Harapanahalli. The project is part of larger development plan aimed at transforming the constituency infrastructure network. She reiterated commitment to make Harapanahalli a model constituency through continuous monitoring and public participation. The bhoomi puja marks beginning of long term infrastructure improvement works in the area officials said.

**HUNSUR DEVELOPMENT LEGACY**

# *H. Vishwanath announces retirement from politics*

**HUNSUR**

Former minister H. Vishwanath has announced his retirement from electoral politics, marking the end of a long political career that significantly influenced development activities in Hunsur taluk and surrounding regions.

Speaking on the announcement, Sathya MAS Foundation president D. Satyappa described Vishwanath as a senior political leader and a committed follower of Devaraja Urs, noting that he had played an important role in state politics and social development. He said Vishwanath had contributed extensively to irrigation, education, and infrastructure projects during his ministerial tenure.

Vishwanath is widely credited with initiating several lake-filling and irrigation projects in Hunsur taluk, including works under Chilkunda, Kalangatta, Maradur, Hejjala, and Arkeshwara Cauvery irrigation systems. These projects reportedly helped improve water storage in multiple lakes and supported agricultural needs in the region.

Development grants sanctioned during his tenure also contributed to road construction and rural infrastructure improvements.

He also served as Education Minister, during which he introduced initiatives aimed at strengthening school management systems and student welfare programs.

His supporters highlight the formation of School Development and Monitoring Committees (SDMCs) and implementation of mid-day meal related schemes as key reforms in the education sector.

During his time as district in-charge minister, Vishwanath is credited with improving drinking water supply systems, particularly bringing Cauvery water to parts of Hunsur taluk. He also played a role in various social and community development initiatives.

Though he has stepped away from electoral contests, Vishwanath is expected to remain active in advisory and political mentoring roles, with supporters stating that his experience will continue to guide younger leaders in the state's political landscape.

## SFI protests over NEET paper leak allegations

**KALABURAGI**

The Student Federation of India (SFI) staged a protest in Kalaburagi condemning alleged irregularities related to the NEET UG 2026 examination and demanding a fair and thorough investigation into the matter.

The protest was held in front of the district office, where SFI members raised concerns over reports of a question paper leak and the subsequent uncertainty faced by students. The organization also demanded compensation for students affected by the situation and called for reforms in the national examination system.

SFI leaders stated that around 22 lakh students across the country appeared for the NEET UG examination conducted on May 3 for admission to medical courses. They alleged that the National Testing Agency (NTA) had failed in its examination management and had repeatedly faced criticism over transparency and fairness issues. They further claimed that reports of question leaks in certain regions had created confusion among students and led to anxiety over possible re-examinations.

QUICK READ

## Sonia Gandhi back home after check-up

**New Delhi**

Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi underwent a routine medical check-up at a private hospital in Gurugram on Wednesday and has since returned home, the party said, clarifying earlier reports that suggested she had been admitted for a minor surgical procedure. "Smt Sonia Gandhi, chairperson of the CPP, had a routine medical check-up and is now back home," Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said in a statement. The 79-year-old Rajya Sabha MP from Rajasthan has faced several health-related issues in recent years and has undergone treatment multiple times at hospitals in Delhi and elsewhere.

## CBI arrests absconding chit fund scam accused

**Agartala**

The Central Bureau of Investigation arrested Sanjit Chakraborty, a proclaimed offender linked to two Tripura chit fund scam cases involving over Rs 7.75 crore. He was arrested in Kolkata on May 12 after allegedly remaining absconding since 2013. The agency said he cheated investors in two separate cases worth Rs 7.48 crore and Rs 27.13 lakh. Investigators traced him through surveillance, Call Detail Record analysis and field verification. He will be brought to Tripura after obtaining a transit warrant from a Kolkata court.

## 5 arrested in LUCC chit fund scam

**New Delhi**

The Central Bureau of Investigation arrested five accused in connection with the LUCC chit fund scam in Uttarakhand. The accused include Sushil Gokhroo, Rajendra Singh Bisht, Tarun Kumar Mourya, Gaurav Rohilla and Mamta Bhandari. The Uttarakhand High Court's Nainital bench had ordered the transfer of all FIRs related to the scam to the CBI in 2025. Following the order, the agency registered a case under IPC, BNS, Uttarakhand Depositors Protection Act and the Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Act.

# Brazil foreign min arrives in India for BRICS meet

Lhe leaders will discuss regional and global developments, economic cooperation, trade, security, innovation and reforms

**NEW DELHI**

India is hosting the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on May 14 and 15 under its presidency for 2026. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will chair the meeting, which will bring together foreign ministers and senior representatives from member and partner nations.

Officials said the leaders will discuss regional and global developments, economic cooperation, trade, security, innovation and reforms in international institutions.

The Ministry of External Affairs welcomed Vieira's arrival and shared pictures of his visit on social media. Brazil's Foreign Ministry also confirmed that the minister travelled to India after completing a two day visit to Central Asia. Brazil earlier held the presidency of BRICS before officially handing over leadership responsibilities to India in December 2025.

During the 4th BRICS Sherpas Meeting held last year, Brazil's Sherpa Ambassador Mauricio Lyrio handed over the presidency gavel to India's Sherpa Ambassador Sudhakar Dalela. India then announced its priorities and agenda for 2026.According to officials the meeting in New Delhi will include discussions on cooperation sustainability resilience and innovation under the theme "BRICS20" Ministers will also hold talks on reforming global governance and strengthening the

multilateral system.

The visiting ministers and heads of delegations are also expected to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi during their stay in India. The previous BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2025.

Officials said the gathering is expected to strengthen coordination among developing nations and improve cooperation on international concerns India's presidency is focusing on inclusive growth multilateral partnerships and solutions for global challenges Several bilateral meetings between participating countries are also likely during the two day diplomatic event

### Joraboevich arrives in Delhi

New Delhi welcomed Uzbekistan Deputy Foreign Minister Aloyev Bakhromjon Joraboevich ahead of the crucial BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on May 14-15. India's External Affairs Ministry greeted the visiting leader as global diplomats gather in the capital to discuss major international issues, including tensions linked to the West Asia conflict.

### Kazakhstan, Nigeria leaders land in capital

Kazakhstan First Deputy Foreign Minister Yerzahan Ashikbayev and Nigeria's Foreign Ministry Permanent Secretary Dunoma Umar Ahmed arrived in New Delhi for the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting on May 14-15. The Ministry of External Affairs welcomed both leaders as diplomats from member and partner nations gather to discuss global issues.

# India-Iran discuss regional issues before BRICS Summit

**NEW DELHI**

India and Iran held important diplomatic discussions on Wednesday ahead of the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in the national capital.

Ministry of External Affairs Secretary (West) Sibi George met Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister for Legal and International Affairs, Kazem Gharibabadi, to discuss bilateral relations and regional developments. The Ministry of External Affairs said the talks focused on recent developments affecting the region and issues of mutual interest between both countries.

According to Iranian sources, Gharibabadi is also expected to participate in the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting scheduled for May 14 and 15 in New Delhi. Iran has confirmed that Foreign Minister Seyed Abbas Araghchi will attend the summit, highlighting the growing importance of ties between Tehran and New Delhi.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Esmaiel Baghaei said India and Iran share strong cooperation through BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.

He noted that both countries continue to maintain close coordination on international matters through these multilateral groups.

Baghaei also stressed the importance of the upcoming BRICS discussions and said Iran is looking forward to holding bilateral meetings with participating ministers, including External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

The diplomatic engagements come during heightened tensions in West Asia

**India and Iran discussed regional developments and bilateral ties ahead of the important BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting**

following recent hostilities involving the United States and Iran. Araghchi and Jaishankar have reportedly held several discussions in recent months regarding regional developments and their impact on global peace and stability.

India took over the BRICS chairmanship from Brazil on January 1, marking its fourth presidency after 2012, 2016 and 2021.

Officials said the New Delhi meeting will boost cooperation on trade, security, diplomacy and governance reforms while encouraging discussions on global challenges and partnerships.

*Officials warned rising youth tobacco use causes serious health issues, educating the public and shopkeepers during raids*

# Maha suspends foreign tours to strengthen fiscal discipline

**MUMBAI**

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Wednesday ordered the immediate suspension of all previously approved foreign visits by ministers and senior officials.

Government sources said every upcoming overseas tour linked to meetings administrative work and study programmes has been put on hold until further notice. Officials explained that departments have been instructed to conduct international discussions through video conferencing and other digital platforms instead of travelling abroad

The state government said the decision reflects its commitment to austerity and careful public spending during uncertain global economic conditions Authorities believe the move will save large amounts spent on air travel accommodation and related expenses Ministers and officials have also been encouraged to avoid unnecessary travel and focus on virtual communication whenever possible

State minister Shambhuraj Desai cancelled his planned visit to London and Paris in support of the initiative Although the journey was reportedly arranged earlier as a family vacation he decided not to travel to support fuel conservation and reduced foreign exchange spending Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar also confirmed that a proposed study tour to Japan involving legislators has been cancelled

The decision follows Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal asking public representatives to limit avoidable foreign travel because of rising fuel prices and tensions in West Asia Officials said Maharashtra will increasingly depend on digital meetings for policy discussions and international cooperation.

They added that virtual exchanges can help maintain global partnerships.

# Punjab-origin biker gang founder jailed in US

**CHANDIGARH**

A United States federal court in California has sentenced Punjab-origin Jashanpreet Singh, founder of the Stockton-based Punjabi Devils Motorcycle Club, to five years and four months in prison for illegal firearms dealing and possession of a machine gun.

According to the US Department of Justice, the 27-year-old had pleaded guilty to unlawful firearms trading and illegal possession of prohibited weapons. US District Judge Dale A Drozd delivered the sentence in Sacramento on May 12.

Authorities said Singh tried to escape to India after the case came to light. He was arrested at San Francisco International Airport on June 26 last year before boarding a flight. Officials stated that Singh earlier faced charges in San Joaquin County and later failed to appear before the court on July 21, resulting in a bench warrant against him.

Federal prosecutors said Singh attempted to sell several illegal weapons to an undercover officer on June 6 last year. The weapons reportedly

included a short-barrel rifle, three assault weapons, three machine gun conversion devices and a revolver.

During a search of his residence, investigators recovered additional firearms, a working machine gun, a silencer, high-capacity drum magazines, a pineapple-style hand grenade and suspected parts of a military-style Claymore mine. Officials said the bomb squad later destroyed the seized explosives and weapons.Authorities said the Punjabi Devils Motorcycle Club, founded by Singh last year, operated as a support group linked to the Hells Angels. Members allegedly wore black jackets with Punjab-themed symbols. The investigation involved DEA, ATF, Homeland Security and local police under "Operation Take Back America."

# Training aircraft emergency landing raises fresh concerns

**MUMBAI**

TA two-seater training aircraft belonging to Red Bird Aviation made an emergency landing near Gojubabi village in Baramati, Maharashtra, on Tuesday after developing a technical problem during a training session.

According to preliminary information, the aircraft suffered an engine malfunction while flying over the area. The pilot quickly responded and safely carried out an emergency landing in an open space near the village, preventing a major accident. Officials confirmed that no casualties or serious injuries were reported in the incident.

Residents rushed to the spot after noticing the aircraft descending rapidly. Many villagers gathered around the site before police and local administrative officials arrived and secured the area. Authorities later restricted public access as technical experts began examining the aircraft.

Officials said the aircraft was being used for routine pilot training when the technical issue occurred. Initial findings suggest engine failure may have caused the sudden emergency landing.

Technical teams are now inspecting the aircraft to determine the exact reason behind the malfunction. The incident has again raised concerns about aviation safety in Baramati and nearby areas.

Earlier this year, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar had died in a separate plane crash, drawing attention to safety standards related to small aircraft operations in the region. Authorities said a detailed investigation has been launched into the latest incident.

Aviation experts are expected to submit a report after examining the aircraft, maintenance records and training procedures followed by the aviation company. Officials added that further action would be taken based on the findings of the investigation.

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ಸಂ. ಎ2/ಬಜೆಟ್/ಟೆಂಡರ್/ವಿವ–3/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.05.2026
ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ
(1) ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಭಟಕಳ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ರಕ್ಷಣಾ ಶಿಬಿರಗಳ ಕಾವಲುಗಾರರನ್ನು, ಇಲಾಖಾ ವಾಹನಗಳಿಗೆ ವಾಹನ ಚಾಲಕರನ್ನು ಮತ್ತು ಗಣಕಯಂತ್ರ ನಿರ್ವಾಹಕರನ್ನು 2026–27 & 2027–28 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ outsource (ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿಗೆ) ಮೂಲಕ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಕುರಿತು. ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.05.2026 ರಂದು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.
(2) ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ರಚನೆ, ಮಾನಸೂನ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ, ನರ್ಸರಿ ಕೆಲಸ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರೇ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ 2026–27 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.05.2026 ರಂದು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.
(3) ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಭಟಕಳ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ರಚನೆ, ಮಾನಸೂನ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ, ನರ್ಸರಿ ಕೆಲಸ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರೇ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ 2026–27 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.05.2026 ರಂದು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.
(4) ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಕುಮಟಾ ಉಪವಿಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ರಚನೆ, ಮಾನಸೂನ್ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ ನೆಡುತೋಪು ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ, ನರ್ಸರಿ ಕೆಲಸ ಮತ್ತು ಇತರೇ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ 2026–27 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿಗೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 25.05.2026 ರಂದು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಮರು ಟೆಂಡರ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.
ಆಸಕ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರುದಾರರು https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in ಮೂಲಕ ಹಾಗೂ ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 08387–295236 ಮೂಲಕ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ.
ಸಹಿ/– ಉಪ ಅರಣ್ಯ ಸಂರಕ್ಷಣಾಧಿಕಾರಿ,
ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಹೊನ್ನಾವರ
DIPR/KWR/KSMCA/121/26-27 Dt.13.05.2026

AIRPORT UPGRADE

# *Cabinet clears Nagpur airport modernisation under PPP*

**NEW DELHI**

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the modernisation and expansion of Nagpur International Airport under the Public Private Partnership model. The decision is expected to strengthen air connectivity, improve cargo movement and support economic growth in central India.

The Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the extension of the lease period of Airports Authority of India land given to MIHAN India Limited beyond August 2039. This will allow MIHAN India Limited to hand over the airport to GMR Nagpur International Airport Limited for a concession period of 30 years from the commercial operation date.

The project is considered an important step in developing Nagpur into a major aviation and cargo hub under the Multi modal International Cargo Hub and Airport at Nagpur project. Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the airport will now be up-

graded with private sector participation and government supervision.

Officials said MIHAN India Limited was formed in 2009 as a joint venture between Airports Authority of India and Maharashtra Airport Development Company Limited. Although airport assets were transferred in 2009, land related issues delayed the lease process. In 2016, MIHAN India Limited invited global bids to select a private operator for the airport.

GMR Airports Limited emerged as the top bidder, but the process was cancelled in 2020 before courts ruled in its favour. After the agreement was signed in 2024, plans were made to expand Nagpur Airport to handle 30 million passengers annually. Officials said the project will improve cargo.

**INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK**
Kumara Park Branch (1193)
Kumara Park Branch, 45, 12th Block, Near BDA Head Office,
Bangalore-560020 Mob : 8925951193, Emai.id: iob1193@iob.in
**LOCKER BREAK OPEN NOTICE**
Notice is hereby given to the persons concerned and public in general that the persons named under this notice have availed the facility of safe deposit lockers at the above mentioned branch of Indian Overseas Bank. The respective branch has already addressed notices/reminder letters by registered post with acknowledgment due (AD) to locker hirers at the address available as per our Bank records with a request to remit the arrears of Locker rent. The said letters were returned. Despite of these notices, the locker hirers have not contacted the branch and have not remitted the locker rent arrears as demanded by the bank. Below named Locker hirers/Legal heirs of locker hirers are requested to consider this as the **BREAK OPEN NOTICE** and contact the Branch concerned with necessary documents and remit the locker rent arrears within **15 days from the date of publication of this notice** failing which the Bank will break open the locker without any further notice or intimation at the cost and sole risk of the hirers or their legal representatives/heirs.

| S. No | Locker Number | Locker Rent Arrears & Late Fee Charges | Locker Hirer & Address |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 20077 | 19,600+GST+ Penalty Arrear since 01/10/2019 | **Mr. Bhajanlal& Mrs.Latha** **Address:** # New No.40/4, Old No.40/4, 10th Road, 5th Cross, BDA Lane Kumara Park West, BANGALORE-560020 |
| 2 | 30152 | 10,300+GST+ Penalty Arrear since 01/10/2021 | **Mrs. Vidya S Rathod** **Address:** 1-54, 4th Floor, Palace Garden Appartment, BANGALORE-560020. |
| 3 | 40181 | 13,500+GST+ Penalty Arrear since 01/10/2019 | **CT Amba Devi & Y J Janardan** **Address :** No.8, 3rd allotment, Srinivasala Nilaya, Maruthi Nagar, Yelhanaka,Bangalore-560064 |

**For Further Details Contact: The Branch Manager,Indian Overseas Bank, Kumara Park Branch, Mobile No : 8525951193.**
**Sd/-**
**INDIAN OVERSEAS BANK**

QUICK READ

## Customs seize foreign cigarettes at Guj airport

**Ahmedabad**

Customs officials at Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel International Airport seized 566 boxes containing over 1.13 lakh foreign-origin cigarette sticks and detained three passengers arriving from Dubai on Wednesday. Officials said the passengers were intercepted after suspicious X-ray images of their luggage were noticed at the arrival hall. The seized consignment included Mond and Gudang Garam brand cigarettes concealed inside checked-in baggage. Customs authorities seized the goods under the Customs Act, 1962, and launched an investigation to identify the intended recipients.

## Delhi cops bust ganja smuggling network

**New Delhi**

The Crime Branch of Delhi Police has busted an inter-state ganja smuggling network operating across Odisha, Rajasthan and Delhi-NCR and arrested two alleged drug traffickers. Officials said the NR-I team recovered around 80.670 kilograms of high-quality ganja hidden inside a Hyundai Verna car during the operation. Police investigations revealed that the accused allegedly sourced ganja from Odisha and supplied it across Delhi-NCR and Rajasthan. Both arrested men were previously involved in cases under the NDPS Act, officials added.

## Gwalior police return lost mobile phones

**Gwalior**

Gwalior Police recovered and returned 571 mobile phones worth Rs 1.41 crore under the "Tera Tujhko Arpan" scheme. Officials said the phones were either lost or stolen and traced through the Central Government's CEIR portal.

Senior Superintendent of Police Dharmveer Singh Yadav said the initiative is an important citizen-focused service. Police also honoured six citizens, including auto-rickshaw and tempo drivers, who voluntarily handed over found mobile phones. Officials added that 1,122 mobile phones have been returned to people during the last two years.

## BJP targets Punjab govt over law and order

**Chandigarh**

Bharatiya Janata Party National General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Wednesday criticised the Punjab government, alleging a collapse of law and order in the state and accusing Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann of engaging in political blame games instead of addressing public safety concerns. Chugh said Punjab is facing a serious security crisis and claimed the government has failed to control rising crime. He alleged that instead of responding to the situation, the Chief Minister is targeting media houses and social media creators to hide administrative failures. He listed several incidents, including blasts at police stations, an attack using a rocket launcher on the Punjab Police headquarters, attacks.

# 'Modi's appeal misread as austerity measure debate'

PM Modi's fuel-saving appeal is wrongly labelled austerity despite focus on economic caution and efficiency

**NEW DELHI**

Multiple media reports and opposition leaders have described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent appeal on fuel conservation, work-from-home practices, reduced imports, and limiting non-essential foreign travel as austerity measures. However, experts say this interpretation is incorrect and misleading.

The term austerity has a specific economic meaning. It refers to situations where governments cut spending, reduce welfare programmes, lower subsidies, and restrict public investment to control fiscal deficits. Economists often link austerity with slower growth, reduced public services, and contractionary policies. None of these conditions exist in the present situation.The government has not reduced capital expenditure or welfare schemes. Instead, public investment in infrastructure, manufacturing incentives, and social programmes continues as before. PM Modi's appeal is seen as a call for responsible economic behaviour during global uncertainty.At a public meeting in Secunderabad, the Prime Minister urged citizens to help protect the economy from global shocks caused by geopolitical tensions and supply chain disruptions. He highlighted rising fuel prices and economic uncertainty as key concerns.He encouraged people to use public transport, adopt car pooling, and increase use of electric vehicles. He also suggested that offices and industries revive work-from-home systems and virtual meetings to reduce fuel consumption, similar to practices during the Covid-19 period.The Prime Minister also advised avoiding unnecessary foreign travel and reducing imports of non-essential goods to save foreign exchange. Experts said these steps reflect economic prudence, not austerity.India's heavy dependence on imported crude oil makes it vulnerable to global price swings and regional conflicts, impacting inflation and trade balance. Experts said PM Modi did not suggest spending cuts but focused on efficient resource use.

*Naidu announces energy plan, urging reduced fuel use, travel, gold spending, and promoting green governance*

# Naidu pushes work from home governance model

**AMARAVATI**

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday said the "Work from Home" system is becoming a permanent feature and will also be introduced in government administration. He said modern technology now allows many services to function remotely and this should be encouraged for efficiency and cost saving.

The Chief Minister supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for energy conservation and responsible public behaviour amid global uncertainties, including the ongoing conflict in West Asia. He urged citizens to follow the eight-point agenda suggested by the Prime Minister to reduce unnecessary consumption and support the national economy.

Naidu said the state government will soon announce its own detailed action plan on energy saving and resource management. He stressed that reducing fuel use will help conserve foreign exchange and strengthen the economy during challenging times.

Speaking at the foundation ceremony of the Bollineni Institute of Skill, Education and Research in Nidamarru, he said government officials and public representatives should set an example by reducing convoy sizes and avoiding wasteful expenditure. He also called for rational security arrangements that are practical and necessary.Naidu advised people to reduce foreign travel and instead explore domestic tourist destinations. He said India has rich tourism potential and citizens should adopt a mindset of "My country, My responsibility." He also echoed the Prime Minister's suggestion to limit unnecessary gold purchases.Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu said work from home will be adopted in government administration. He supported PM Modi's energy-saving appeal, urged reduced fuel use, limited travel, and promoted domestic tourism, green energy, and efficient governance reforms.

# 3 TMC leaders arrested in Katwa cases

**KOLKATA**

Police in East Burdwan district's Katwa arrested three brothers linked to the Trinamool Congress on Tuesday in connection with multiple criminal cases, officials said on Wednesday. The arrests have sparked fresh political tensions in the region.

The accused have been identified as local Trinamool leader Babulal Sheikh, Youth Trinamool leader Kochi Sheikh, and Chhattu Sheikh. Police from Katwa Police Station took them into custody and later produced them before a local court after medical examination at Katwa Sub-Divisional Hospital.

Officials said several cases have been registered against the trio under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). Investigators alleged that the accused were involved in intimidation and exerting influence in their area for a long time, creating fear among local residents. Police have sought custody for further questioning.

The arrests triggered strong political reactions in Katwa, with opposition parties targeting the ruling Trinamool Congress. Newly elected BJP MLA Krishna Ghosh alleged that criminal elements were protected during the previous TMC regime and said law enforcement is now taking necessary action.

However, family members of the arrested men denied all allegations, claiming the cases were politically motivated. They said the three brothers were falsely implicated and had earlier been called by police before being arrested.

The incident has led to heated debates in local political circles, with both sides exchanging accusations. Police officials said investigations are continuing and more details will emerge after further questioning of the accused.Authorities also noted that since the West Bengal

# Uttarakhand launches energy conservation drive

**DEHRADUN**

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Wednesday announced a 50 per cent reduction in his official vehicle fleet and said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal for energy conservation is a national responsibility.

The decision was taken during a Cabinet meeting focused on short-term and long-term resource-saving reforms.

The Chief Minister said the appeal reflects the need for a self-reliant and responsible India. He urged ministers, officials and public representatives to avoid unnecessary travel, use public transport and help turn energy conservation into a mass movement across the state.

The state Cabinet approved several measures, including reducing ministerial fleets by half and introducing a weekly "No Vehicle Day", where government employees will work from home.

Citizens will also be encouraged to follow the same practice voluntarily.The government will promote video conferencing for official meetings and encourage the private sector to adopt flexible work-from-home arrangements.

Officials handling multiple departments will be allowed to use only one vehicle per day.


**GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA**

**KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT SECRETARIAT**

**Revenue Department, M. S. Building, Bengaluru**

**No: E-RD 185 GRC 2025** **Date:26.03.2026**

**NOTIFICATION**

Whereas, upon considering the report of the Police Inspector, City Market Police Station, Bengaluru City and after due investigation of the complaints of depositors it has come to the notice of the Government, that Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru is involved in fraudulent transactions by clandestinely and illegally collecting deposits or money from the general public and thereafter have failed to return the same either after maturity or on demand made by the depositors or complainants with promised interest and other assured benefits and thereby have failed to render the services promised to them.

And whereas, it has further come to the notice of the Government that Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru and people associating with them have been acquiring lands, movable and immovable properties, cash and others from and out of the deposits or money so collected, from the depositors or complainants and thereby deviating from the intended purposes of accepting the deposits or money.

And whereas, the Government has reason to believe that the actions of Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru and people associating with them are acting in and detrimental to the interest of the depositors or complainants whose intention was to defraud the innocent depositors, and it has become necessary to protect the interest of the depositors of the Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru.

And whereas, now the Government after considering the report of the Police Inspector, City Market Police Station, Bengaluru City and investigation officer for Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru Fraudulent Company and satisfying itself about the urgent need to protect the interest of the depositors and in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of Section (3) of the Karnataka Protection of interest of Depositors in Financial Establishment Act, 2004 (Karnataka Act 30 of 2005) hereby makes the following order, namely:

**"ORDER"**

Now therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (2) of Section (3) of the Karnataka Protection of interest of Depositors in Financial Establishment Act, 2004 (Karnataka Act 30 of 2005), the Government under the circumstances stated above having satisfied that in order to protect the interest of depositors it is necessary to attach the movable and immovable properties believed to belong to Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru.

Therefore, the Government hereby attaches the immovable properties as specified in the Annexure to this order believed to have been acquired by the Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi - Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru either in its own name or in the name of any other person from and out of the deposits collected by the Sri Pancha Aishwarya Multi-Purpose Souharda Cooperative Limited, Bengaluru, and where it transpires that such money or such other properties of the said financial establishment, or the personal assets of the promoters, partners, directors, managers or members or any other person of the said financial establishment is not sufficient for the repayment of the deposits or interest or such other assured benefits to the depositors.

Note: All the aforesaid immovable properties from the date of publication of this order in the Official Gazette, shall forth with vest with the Competent Authority, who has been appointed by the Government, pending further orders from the Special Court.

**By Order and in the name of the Governor of Karnataka**
**Sd/-**
**(Anwar Basha)**
**Deputy Secretary to Government,**
**Revenue Department**
**(Services-1, SSLR & Special Cell)**

**Annexure**

| ಕ್ರ ಸಂ. | ಸ್ವತ್ತಿನ ವಿವರ (ಚಕ್ಕುಬಂದಿ ಒಳಗೊಂಡಂತೆ) | ದಾಖಲೆಗಳ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಸ್ವತ್ತಿನ ಮಾಲಿಕ | ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ವಿವರ | ಖರೀದಿ ದರ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) | ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ದರ (ರೂ.ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) | ಷರಾ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | The Residential Apartment bearing No. 302 on the western side in the Second Floor of the Apartment Building Known as "SURASA ENCLAVE", Constructed on the Schedule 'A' Property with a super built-up area measuring 3200 Square Feet (Which is inclusive of balconies and proportionate share in common areas, etc.,) along with Two Car Parking Spaces No. 302 and Two Scooter Parking Space No. 302 in the Stilt Floor. SITUATED AT Bengaluru South Taluk, Basavanagudi. Bounded by: East by: Puttanna Road West by: Private Property North by: Private Property South by: Private Property | 1) K.N. Roopa w/o M. A. Satheesha 2) M.A. Satheesha s/o K.R. Narasimha shettey | This property is registered at Office of the Sub Registrar, Basavanagudi, Bengaluru vide sale deed No. CMP-1-01230/2019-20, dated:24-05-2019 | 1,90,00,000/– | **** | **** ಮೌಲ್ಯಮಾಪನ ಸಮಯದಲಿ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಮೌಲ್ಯ ಮಾಪಕರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. |
| 02 | The Residential Flat Bearing No. 3 measuring to an extent of 1080 sqfts in First Floor rear portion including common area. of the Building Known as "Shesahdri Apartments", Constructed on the Schedule 'D' Property (Which is inclusive of stair cases, lobby areas, lift, lift rooms, electric rooms and pump room) along with one Car Parking Space and Two wheeler in the basement. Situated at Bengaluru North, Malleshwaram. Bounded by: East by: Venkatanga Iyngar Road,(Now Sampige road) West by: Consevency Road North by: Vacant Land belonging to Municipality and now occupied by water works quarters. South by: Late Ramanaswamaiah's Residence. | 1) K.N. Roopa w/o M. A. Satheesha 2) M.A. Satheesha s/o K.R. Narasimha shettey | This property is registered at Office of the Sub Registrar, Gandhinagar, Bengaluru vide sale deed No. GAN-1-06917/2018-19, dated:01-03-2019 | 96,00,000/– | **** | **** ಮೌಲ್ಯಮಾಪನ ಸಮಯದಲಿ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ಮೌಲ್ಯ ಮಾಪಕರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಲಾಗುವುದು. |

**Sd/-**
**(Anwar Basha)**
**Deputy Secretary to Government,**
**Revenue Department**
**(Services-1, SSLR & Special Cell)**

**DIPR/CP/JA/649/2026-27**



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ನಂ.55, ನೆಲಮಹಡಿ, ಅಭಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣ ಭವನ, ರಿಸಲ್ದಾರ್‌ರಸ್ತೆ,
ಶೇಷಾದ್ರಿಪುರಂ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು–560020

**No.KSDB/EE/No 1.div/Rental space/2026-27** **Date:13.05.2026**

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನ ಶೇಷಾದ್ರಿಪುರಂ ನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅಭಯ ಸಂಕೀರ್ಣ ಭವನದ 2ನೇ ಮಹಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ 5000 ಚ.ಅಡಿ ಮತ್ತು 4ನೇ ಮಹಡಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ 1500 ಚ.ಅಡಿ (ಒಟ್ಟು 6500 ಚ.ಅಡಿ) ಜಾಗವು ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಾಡಿಗೆಗೆ ಲಭ್ಯವಿದೆ. ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ದರ ರೂ.60.10 ಪ್ರತಿ ಚ.ಅಡಿಗೆ+ರೂ.2.00 ನಿರ್ವಹಣೆ+18% ಜಿ.ಎಸ್.ಟಿ. ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ/ಅರೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ/ಖಾಸಗಿ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಮೊದಲ ಆದ್ಯತೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ: ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು, ನಂ.1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಕೊಳಗೇರಿ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಮಂಡಳಿ, ಮೊ :8884492432, ಇ–ಮೇಲ್ : ksdbeeno.1@gmail.com

ಸಹಿ/–
ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು,
ನಂ.1ನೇ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಕಕೊಅಮ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

DIPR/CP/629/Zen/2026-27

QUICK READ

## Karachi University teachers continue stir

**Karachi**

Karachi University is facing a serious financial crisis as teachers accused the administration of poor financial management and irregular budgeting practices. Teachers continued their examination boycott for the eighth straight day over unpaid dues, affecting thousands of students. Karachi University Teachers Society President Ghufran Alam claimed the university has pending payments of nearly PKR 1 billion and a total shortfall of around PKR 1.5 billion. He also alleged that income from several costly academic programmes was either hidden or not properly included in the university budget records

## Inflation raises funeral costs across Pak

**Rawalpindi**

Rising inflation in Pakistan has made funeral and burial expenses unaffordable for many poor families in Rawalpindi. According to reports, families are spending between Pakistani Rs 40,000 and Rs 45,000 for burial arrangements, including grave space and excavation. Traditional free grave-digging services by volunteers have almost disappeared. Prices of burial shrouds and funeral items have also sharply increased. Several cemeteries are reportedly running out of space, while concerns have grown over unethical graveyard practices, including the reuse of old graves for money.

# Putin hails test launch of 'Sarmat' ballistic missile

### He termed it the "most powerful missile system in the world" and a key component of Russia's strategic deterrence capabilities

**MOSCOW**

Russian President Vladimir Putin praised the successful testing of the Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile, calling it Russia's most powerful missile system. During a videoconference with Strategic Missile Forces Commander Sergei Karakayev, Putin congratulated military personnel, scientists, engineers and defence workers involved in the project.

Putin said Russia started modernising its strategic deterrence systems after the United States withdrew from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in 2002. He stated that Moscow then focused on creating advanced weapons capable of overcoming modern missile defence systems.

According to Putin, the Sarmat missile is more advanced than the Soviet-era Voyevoda system and has a payload strength far greater than Western missile systems. He claimed the missile could travel through both ballistic and suborbital routes, covering more than 35,000 kilometres with improved targeting accuracy.

The Russian President also claimed that the Sarmat system could bypass all current and future missile defence shields. He announced that the missile would officially enter combat service later this year.

Putin further mentioned other advanced Russian weapons systems, including the Avangard hypersonic missile, Kinzhal air-launched

missile, Oreshnik medium-range missile and the Poseidon underwater vehicle. He added that the Burevestnik nuclear-powered cruise missile was nearing completion.

The Sarmat programme was first unveiled in 2018 as part of Russia's next-generation weapons initiative. Putin described the successful test as a major achievement for Russia's defence sector and national security.

## 'Russia to fulfil all agreements on energy supply to India'

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov assured that India's energy interests would remain protected despite global tensions and Western sanctions on Russia. Speaking ahead of the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Lavrov said Russia would continue ensuring stable energy supplies to India and honour all agreements with partner countries. He accused the United States of trying to control major global energy routes and pressuring nations maintaining energy ties with Russia. Lavrov claimed India clearly understood the current global situation and said Moscow would do everything possible to prevent "unfair competition" from affecting energy arrangements with New Delhi. Lavrov also criticised European nations for reducing dependence on Russian oil and gas, calling the move politically motivated. He claimed Europe was facing economic and energy problems because of restrictions on Russian energy imports and would increasingly depend on more expensive US liquefied natural gas supplies.

## No leader as loved at home as Modi: Norwegian politician

**OSLO**

Former Norwegian minister and ex-UNEP chief Erik Solheim strongly praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi ahead of his Norway visit scheduled from May 18 to May 19.

Writing in Norwegian newspaper Dagens Naeringsliv, Solheim described Modi as the world's most popular politician and said Western leaders had much to learn from his environmental message and development policies.

Solheim wrote that no major world leader enjoyed the same level of public support at home as Modi. He noted that the Prime Minister's approval ratings remained close to 70 per cent and said Modi had become one of the world's most influential democratic leaders.

The former minister praised India's economic growth under Modi, saying the country was expanding at around seven per cent annually, faster than many large economies. He added that India could become the world's second-largest economy by 2050 if the present growth trend continued.

Solheim also highlighted Modi's humble background in Vadnagar, Gujarat, where his family sold tea at a railway

station. He described Modi as a self-made leader who rose through determination and leadership.

He particularly appreciated India's renewable energy growth, mentioning large solar and hydropower projects, modern airports and improved roads across the country. Solheim said Modi's green development model aimed to reduce poverty while promoting sustainable growth. He added that Nordic leaders should carefully listen to Modi during their upcoming discussions.

Solheim commented on India's changing political landscape, saying the Bharatiya Janata Party had gained support across caste and class groups. He noted that the party received backing from both business families and tribal communities. However, he added that India's progress should ensure inclusion for Muslim minorities too.

## Pak under fire over rising sexual violence cases

**ISLAMABAD**

A recent sexual assault case involving a 19-year-old mother in Pakistan's Rawat area has renewed concerns about the country's handling of gender-based violence and the challenges faced by survivors seeking justice.

According to reports, the young woman had gone out to buy Eid clothes for her children when she was allegedly assaulted inside a moving vehicle. The case has drawn public attention and increased scrutiny of Pakistan's law enforcement and judicial systems.

A report by Asian News Post stated that the incident reflects wider structural problems in addressing sexual violence. It highlighted concerns over delayed police responses, weak investigations and lengthy court proceedings, which often reduce confidence in the justice system.

The report said limited police resources, procedural gaps and insufficient training can affect evidence collection and slow investigations. It added that sexual assault cases in Pakistan frequently take years to conclude, placing emotional and social pressure on survivors and discouraging many from reporting crimes.

*In letter to US president, congressional commission says silence will leave China free to 'use human beings as bargaining chips'*

# Exiled groups urge Trump to confront Xi on rights

**WASHINGTON**

The East Turkistan Government-in-Exile and the East Turkistan National Movement called on US President Donald Trump to raise issues concerning East Turkistan and Tibet during his summit with Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing. Trump began his two-day state visit to China on Wednesday.

The organisations accused China of carrying out severe human rights abuses against Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and other Turkic communities in Xinjiang, which they referred to as East Turkistan.

The groups claimed the campaign included forced labour, mass detention, family separations and forced sterilisation.

The organisations also urged Trump not to support any agreement that could strengthen Chinese control over the region. They claimed that valuable minerals including lithium, titanium and rare earth elements were being extracted under conditions that international experts had criticised. Mamtimin Ala said the only long-term solution was restoring East Turkistan's independence. He added that the group had recently submitted a petition to the United Nations Decolonisation Committee seeking international support.

Salih Hudayar claimed an independent East Turkistan could provide critical minerals to the United States and reduce dependence on China. The groups also alleged that China was expanding missile and artificial intelligence infrastructure in the region, calling it a threat to American national security.

Trump's visit comes at a time of tensions between Washington and Beijing over trade, technology and security matters. The exile groups said the United States should place human rights concerns at the centre of discussions with China. They also urged world leaders to support the rights and identity of Uyghurs and other minority communities living in the region. China has repeatedly denied allegations of abuse in Xinjiang and maintains that its policies are aimed at fighting extremism, improving security and supporting development in the area.

## EBU raises concerns over Tibetan religious freedom

**BRUSSELS**

Concerns regarding China's alleged involvement in Tibetan religious matters were raised during the Annual General Meeting of the European Buddhist Union (EBU) held in Brussels on May 9.

The gathering mainly focused on safeguarding the religious rights of Tibetan Buddhists and protecting traditional spiritual practices.

Rigzin Genkhang, representing the Central Tibetan Administration and the Office of Tibet in Brussels, appealed to the global community to stand with Tibetan Buddhists. He expressed concern over what he described as increasing Chinese efforts to influence Tibetan spiritual traditions and the future succession process of the Dalai Lama.

Genkhang stated that the selection of religious leaders should remain entirely spiritual and free from political pressure or state control. He also mentioned China's "Ethnic Unity Law" and referred to a recent European Parliament resolution that criticised

the legislation.

The meeting took place at Saint-Gilles town hall and included European leaders, Buddhist representatives and officials. Among those present were Jean Spinette, Nicola Censini and Antonella Sberna, who addressed the gathering through a video message.

The European Buddhist Union urged the international community not to recognise any religious leader appointed by the Chinese government. The organisation also called for peaceful dialogue and diplomatic efforts to resolve the long-standing Tibet-China issue.

## Baloch groups condemn Gwadar workers' shooting

**BALOCHISTAN**

Several Baloch labourers were reportedly killed and many others injured after alleged firing by Pakistan Coast Guard personnel in the Kuntani area of Jiwani in Gwadar district.

According to local residents and eyewitnesses, the workers were carrying out routine labour activities near the coastal belt when gunfire suddenly erupted, creating panic in the area.

Reports said injured workers were shifted to nearby hospitals, where some remained in critical condition. Pakistani authorities had not released any official statement on the incident at the time of reporting.

Several Baloch political parties, student organisations and rights groups strongly condemned the incident. Sholan Baloch described the incident as the "Kuntani massacre" and accused security forces of deliberately targeting poor labourers.

## Hezbollah rockets target Israeli troops near Lebanon border

**TEL AVIV**

The Israel Defense Forces said Hezbollah launched rockets toward Israeli troops operating in southern Lebanon on Wednesday, though no injuries were reported. Sirens were activated in northern Israel, including the Zar'it area, after the attack.

According to the IDF, several rockets landed near Israeli soldiers stationed south of the Forward Defense Line. The military said troops were continuing operations to destroy Hezbollah infrastructure and remove threats to Israeli civilians.

The IDF also reported intercepting suspicious aerial targets in the operational area. In one incident, troops identified a person allegedly using surveillance equipment against Israeli forces. The military said the individual was later killed in tank fire. Another alert regarding a hostile aircraft infiltration near Avivim was later confirmed as a false identification.

Meanwhile, Naim Qassem said Hezbollah's military capabilities were an internal Lebanese matter and would not be discussed during ongoing tensions with Israel. In a televised speech, he warned that Hezbollah was prepared for a prolonged conflict and would not retreat under military pressure. The situation along the Israel-Lebanon border remains tense despite a US-brokered ceasefire announced earlier this year.

TRUMP-XI SUMMIT

# *China warns on US arms sales to Taiwan*

**WASHINGTON DC**

China has once again warned the United States ahead of President Donald Trump's visit to Beijing from May 13 to 15, stressing that its "four red lines" in bilateral relations should not be crossed.

In messages posted on X, the Chinese Embassy in Washington listed the sensitive issues as Taiwan, democracy and human rights, political systems, and China's development rights.

The embassy stated that China and the US should focus on building a stable and constructive relationship based on mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and cooperation that benefits both countries. The remarks came as preparations continued for Trump's official visit and high-level talks with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Meanwhile, Trump confirmed that several leading American business executives were travelling with him aboard Air Force One. He denied media reports suggesting that Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang had not been invited. Trump described Huang's participation in the visit as an honour. According to Trump, the business delegation also

includes Elon Musk, Tim Cook, Larry Fink, Stephen Schwarzman and other major industry leaders. Trump said he intended to urge Xi Jinping to further open China's markets for American companies and investments during the discussions.

The US President described Xi as a friend and expressed optimism about the outcome of the visit. He said trade and economic cooperation would remain the main topics during meetings with Chinese officials. The White House also confirmed that former First Lady Melania Trump would not accompany Trump on the trip to China.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **MOHAMMED YAHYA**, S/O MOHAMMAD YOUSUFF resident of No: 6/1, Flot No: F01, Fouzia Enclave, Kandaswamy Mudaliar Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru - 560005. Have changed my name to **MOHAMMAD YAHYA**, vide affidavit dated: 07.05.2026, before Notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **NAZIRA BEGUM**, W/O MOHAMMAD YAHYA resident of No: 6/1, Flot No: F01, Fouzia Enclave, Kandaswamy Mudaliar Road, Frazer Town, Bengaluru - 560005. Have changed my name to **NAZEERA BEGUM**, vide affidavit dated: 07.05.2026, before Notary MEER HASSAN, Bengaluru.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **CHAND PASHA KHADAR BASHA**, S/o KHADAR BASHA, Resident of No: 10/4, Bradshaw Street, Bengaluru – 560001. Have changed my name to **CHAND PASHA**, vide affidavit dated: 06.05.2026, before Notary G DAYANANDA, Bengaluru.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **SHAHANVAZ BEGUM**, W/o Nijara Ahmed, resident of. No 06, Khaja Block, Chikkanna Block, Devarajeevanahalli, Bangalore 560045, have changed my name to **SHANAWAZ**, vide affidavit dated: 12.05.2026, before Notary CHANDRA SHEKAR.M, Bangalore

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **NOOR JAHAN**, W/o. Mohammed Asif Ahmed, Resident of No.75/41, 6th Main, New Gurappana Palya Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru-560029, have changed my name to **SAYEEDA NOORI**, vide affidavit dated: 13.05.2026 before notary V. RAJASHEKHARA, Bengaluru.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **PIYUSH KOTHARI** , S/o, Prakash Manikchand Kothari, Resident of No,706, 42nd Cross 3rd Block Near Old Police Station Rajajinagar Bengaluru District, 560010, have changed my name to **PIYUSH KOTHARI PRAKASH** , vide affidavit dated: 13.05.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

**NAME CHANGE**

I, **JAMEELA BEE** , W/o, Sami Ulla, Resident of No 32,5th Cross Arfath Nagar West Of Padarayana Pura Bengaluru Dist, 560026, have changed my name to **JAMEELA BANU** , vide affidavit Dated: 13.05.2026 before notary B.A. LAKSHMINARAYANA RAO, Bengaluru.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **NASIM UNNISA** W/O MUNAVAR, Residing at Hurulagurki Village, Venkatagirikote Post, Vijayapura Hobli, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District-562110, That my name is **NASIM UNNISA** this is correct name was mentioned My Aadhaar, Pan Card also correctly mentioned as **NASIM UNNISA** and some document my name mentioned is true and correct. But in my pass port wrongly mentioned my name as **NASEEMA UNNISA** instead of **NASIM UNNISA.**

I submit that, my name herein **NASIM UNNISA** is correct and same may be considered by the concerned authority. Sworn before **P. V. Ramchandra Reddy** Advocate, Dated: 13-05-2026.

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# Ronaldo eyes final WC amid Saudi future doubts

## Portugal superstar remains determined proving age and league criticism cannot slow ambitions anymore

**MADRID**

Cristiano Ronaldo is preparing for what is expected to be his sixth and final FIFA World Cup, determined to prove he can still perform at the highest level despite leaving European football to play in Saudi Arabia.

The Portugal captain, who turned 41 in February, shocked the football world when he joined Al Nassr FC in late 2022 after ending his second spell with Manchester United F.C.. The move sparked criticism from fans and pundits, many of whom believed Ronaldo had effectively stepped away from elite competition.

However, Ronaldo has continued to silence doubters with consistent performances and goals for both club and country.

Portugal coach Roberto Martínez insisted the veteran forward remains as motivated and influential as ever ahead of the global tournament next month.

"He keeps performing and he keeps showing his value and that he is important for the national team," Martínez said. "To have that hunger when you've won everything in the game is quite remarkable."

Ronaldo and longtime rival Lionel Messi are both set to become the first players to feature in six World Cups. Ronaldo already holds the record for most appearances and goals in men's international football, with 226 caps and 143 goals for Portugal.

The forward is also the only player to score in five different World Cups.

Despite concerns over the quality of football in Saudi Arabia, Ronaldo's numbers remain extraordinary. Since joining Al Nassr, he has continued scoring at an impressive rate while helping Portugal maintain its competitive edge internationally.

He has scored 25 goals in his last 30 appearances for Portugal and recently played a key role in the team's UEFA Nations League triumph, including scoring in the final against Spain.

Ronaldo has repeatedly defended the Saudi Pro League against criticism, arguing that scoring there is more challenging than many believe.

"The numbers don't lie," Ronaldo said in a previous interview. "For me it's easier to score in Spain than score in Saudi."

Although he has confirmed this World Cup will be his last, questions remain over how much longer he will continue playing professionally.

For now, Ronaldo's focus remains firmly on leading Portugal in one final attempt to win football's biggest prize.

# Southampton Reach Playoff Final amid Spying Row

## Saints edge Middlesbrough after extra time to move closer toward Premier League promotion

**SOUTHAMPTON**

Southampton F.C. moved within one victory of a return to the Premier League after defeating Middlesbrough F.C. 2-1 after extra time in a dramatic Championship playoff semifinal overshadowed by a spying controversy.

The tense second leg at St Mary's Stadium ended with Southampton sealing a 2-1 aggregate victory thanks to a late winner from Shea Charles, whose cross curled directly into the bottom corner with just four minutes remaining in extra time.

The match unfolded under intense scrutiny following allegations that unauthorized filming of Middlesbrough's training sessions had taken place before the semifinal clash. The English Football League has charged Southampton with breaching competition regulations and requested an independent disciplinary hearing at the earliest opportunity.

Southampton, however, sought additional time to complete an internal review into the matter, meaning any punishment is likely to be decided before the playoff final against Hull City A.F.C. on May 23.

The Championship playoff final is widely regarded as the richest single match in world football, with promotion to the Premier League potentially worth more than £200 million through broadcast revenue, sponsorship and prize money.

Tensions boiled over throughout the semifinal. Southampton coach Tonda Eckert and Middlesbrough manager Kim Hellberg were involved in a heated confrontation on the touchline near the end of the first half before being separated by officials.

After the goalless first leg, Hellberg had openly criticised Southampton over the spying allegations, accusing the club of attempting to "cheat."

The fiery atmosphere continued during the match when an on-field exchange between Middlesbrough defender Luke Ayling and Southampton's Taylor Harwood-Bellis reportedly led to allegations of discriminatory language, according to British media reports.

Despite the off-field distractions and emotional intensity surrounding the contest, Southampton managed to maintain composure and secure progression to the final.

The Saints are aiming for an immediate return to the Premier League after suffering relegation last season, ending an 11-year stay in England's top division from 2012 to 2023.

Hull City, meanwhile, are seeking their first Premier League appearance since 2017, setting up a high-stakes final later this month.

# Al Attiyah Headlines Strong Field For Jordan Rally in MERC Championship

**AMMAN**

Nasser Al-Attiyah headed a star-studded field for the Jordan Rally, the third round of the 2026 FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), set to begin on Friday across the Dead Sea and Jordan Valley regions.

The six-time Dakar Rally champion arrived as the favourite while chasing a record-extending 21st regional title and an 18th victory in Jordan since first winning the event in 2003.

Al Attiyah teamed up with Spanish navigator Candido Carrera in a Skoda Fabia RS prepared by Autotek Motorsport. He led a competitive 17-car field featuring drivers from 10 nations and six Rally2 category machines.

The Qatari opened the 2026 MERC season with victory in Oman before compatriot Abdulaziz Al Kuwari claimed the second round in Qatar. Al Attiyah currently remained firmly in contention for yet another regional crown in a career already filled with records and achievements.

One of his strongest challengers was expected to be Oman's Abdullah Al Rawahi, who partnered Jordanian co-driver Ata Al-Hmoud in another Skoda Fabia RS. The duo had previously won the Jordan Rally in 2023 and hoped a return to full fitness would reignite their championship campaign.

Veteran Qatari driver Nasser Khalifa Al-Attiyah entered the round as the championship leader after consistent performances in Oman and Qatar. He partnered Lebanese co-driver Ziad Chehab in the only Ford Fiesta on the entry list. Saudi Arabia's Hamza Bakhashab also emerged as a serious title contender this season. The Jeddah-based driver, accompanied by Irish navigator Lorcan Moore in a Toyota GR Yaris, sat second in the championship standings and aimed to emulate his father Abdullah Bakhashab, the 1995 regional champion.

*Veteran Dutch coach returns aiming guide Curaçao through memorable debut World Cup tournament*

# Curaçao Reappoints Dick Advocaat Ahead Of Historic FIFA WC Campaign

**WILLEMSTAD**

Dick Advocaat has returned as Curaçao head coach just three months after stepping down, with the veteran manager now set to lead the Caribbean nation at its historic first FIFA World Cup appearance.

The Curaçao football federation confirmed the 78-year-old's reappointment, a day after compatriot Fred Rutten departed the role following a brief spell in charge.

Advocaat had originally resigned in February citing a family health issue after successfully guiding Curaçao through qualification for the expanded 2026 FIFA World Cup. However, reports suggested players were eager for his return after two disappointing warm-up defeats under Rutten against Australia and China in March.

In a statement, the federation said discussions regarding the details of Advocaat's appointment were ongoing, with the objective of ensuring "stability, clarity and continuity" around the national team ahead of the tournament.

Curaçao's World Cup debut will also place Advocaat in the history books. When the team faces Germany national football team in Houston on June 14, he will become the oldest coach ever to manage at a FIFA World Cup at 78 years of age. The previous record belonged to Otto Rehhagel, who coached Greece at the 2010 World Cup aged 71.

This will be Advocaat's third World Cup as a head coach and remarkably his third with a different nation. He previously led the Netherlands national football team at the 1994 tournament and South Korea in 2006.

Curaçao has been drawn in a challenging group alongside Germany, Ecuador and Ivory Coast in the first-ever 48-team World Cup, jointly hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. The expanded tournament format significantly benefited the CONCACAF region by providing additional qualification spots, helping smaller nations like Curaçao secure a place on football's biggest stage.

# Kriish, Manish and Mukund Advance as Karan Exits Karnataka Open Challenger

**BENGALURU**

Indian players Kriish Tyagi, Manish Sureshkumar and Mukund Sasikumar advanced to the second round of the Karnataka Open ATP 50 Challenger, while sixth-seeded Karan Singh suffered an early exit. Wild card entrant Kriish Tyagi delighted local fans at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium with a composed 6-2, 7-5 victory over Japanese qualifier Taiyo Yamanaka in the opening round.

The 19-year-old Bengaluru player, currently studying and competing in collegiate tennis at Texas A&M University in the United States, showed confidence from the beginning by breaking Yamanaka's serve in the opening game. Kriish maintained control throughout the first set and sealed it comfortably 6-2.

The second set proved more competitive as the higher-ranked Yamanaka settled into rhythm and challenged the Indian teenager with consistent serving and clean returns. However, Kriish produced the decisive break in the 11th game before serving out the match 7-5.

Another Indian player who enjoyed a memorable day was Manish Sureshkumar. The 26-year-old recorded his first ATP Challenger main draw victory in more than six years by defeating American qualifier Ronit Karki 6-4, 7-6 (7).

# Tiger Woods' Prescription Records Shared in Florida DUI Case

**STUART**

Tiger Woods will have his prescription medication records handed over to prosecutors as part of the ongoing investigation into his March arrest on suspicion of driving under the influence in Florida.

Martin County Circuit Judge Darren Steele approved the agreement during a brief hearing after discussions between Woods' legal team and state prosecutors.

The prosecution had requested records from a Palm Beach pharmacy covering all prescription medications issued to Woods from the beginning of the year through March, the month of the incident.

Woods' attorney Doug Duncan had initially opposed the request, arguing that the golfer had constitutional privacy rights regarding his medical information. However, Duncan acknowledged during the hearing that such rights were not absolute and that prosecutors could present legitimate reasons for requiring the records in the case.

As part of the agreement, prosecutors accepted the defence's request for a protective order restricting access to the documents. Under the court-approved arrangement, the records will only be accessible to prosecutors, law enforcement officials, state experts and Woods' defence team.

Legal experts said the development was not unusual for cases involving suspected impairment caused by drugs rather than alcohol.

Florida law clearly defines alcohol impairment at a blood-alcohol level of 0.08 percent or higher, but there is no fixed measurement standard for prescription medications or other drugs. As a result, prosecutors are expected to rely heavily on field sobriety tests, police observations and supporting evidence to establish impairment.

Woods has pleaded not guilty to the charge.

According to the sheriff's office report, deputies found two pain pills in Woods' pocket after his SUV reportedly clipped a truck trailer before overturning on a residential road in Jupiter Island.

Withdrawal of leading contenders changes complexion of women's 57kg wrestling competition completely

# Vinesh's Absence Leaves 57kg Category without Several Top Wrestlers

**NANDINI NAGAR**

The women's 57kg category at the 2026 Senior Open Ranking Tournament witnessed a dramatic change in complexion after Vinesh Phogat was not permitted to compete, leading to the withdrawal of several prominent wrestlers from the event.

The tournament, currently underway in Uttar Pradesh's Nandini Nagar, had generated significant excitement after Vinesh, a two-time World Championship bronze medallist, registered for the competition. However, her eventual absence shifted the spotlight away from the category and altered the competition dynamics considerably.

Several notable names, including Manisha, Neha and Tapsya, who had initially registered in the 57kg division, later withdrew from the tournament. While the category originally had 10 entries including Vinesh, the final number rose to 14 after fresh participants joined and multiple established wrestlers stepped away.

Among the withdrawals, Manisha had recently clinched gold in the 57kg category at the Zagreb Open earlier this year. Neha, another strong contender, won bronze at the 2026 Asian Championships in the 59kg category and enjoyed a successful 2025 season with multiple international medals, including titles at the Yasar Dogu, Vehbi Emre and Hamit Kaplan Tournament and the Mongolia Open Ranking Series.

Tapsya, who also pulled out, had won gold medals at both the U20 World Championships and U20 Asian Championships last year.

Her father Parmesh Ahlawat explained that academic commitments and preparation for upcoming international events influenced the decision.

"Tapsya appeared in her BA final year examination today. Besides, she also has to compete at the U23 Asian Championships later this month, so we decided to withdraw her entry," he said.

He added that her primary focus remains the upcoming Asian Games selection trials.

Sources close to Manisha also stated that she preferred to avoid back-to-back competitions while training at the national camp ahead of the Asian Games trials.

Despite the increase in entries, Vinesh's absence undeniably reduced the overall glamour and anticipation surrounding the 57kg competition.

# Black Box buys Brazil tech giant 2S Inovações

Black Box Limited completes its acquisition of Brazil's 2S Inovações Tecnológicas, targeting Latin American growth and significant revenue increases.

**MUMBAI**

Black Box Limited, a major global technology company, has officially finished its purchase of the Brazilian firm 2S Inovações Tecnológicas. This exciting move, marks a huge step in the company's plan to grow its business across Latin America and reach a yearly revenue goal of $2 billion by 2030.Based in São Paulo, 2S Inovações Tecnológicas has been a leader in the tech world since 1992. They specialize in building the "digital backbone" for businesses, including data centers, cloud services, and cybersecurity. By joining forces, Black Box gains a massive advantage in the fast-growing Brazilian market, where more companies are now using artificial intelligence and cloud computing to stay competitive.

Sanjeev Verma, the CEO of Black Box, shared his excitement about the deal. He noted that the expertise 2S brings in networking and digital security perfectly matches what Black Box does worldwide. He believes this partnership will help customers build stronger, safer, and faster digital systems.Beyond just technical skills, this deal is a smart financial move. The acquisition is expected to add about Rs 500 crore to the company's yearly earnings. As global demand for secure data centers and smart networks rises, Black Box is now better positioned to help clients transform their technology. By combining their talents, both companies aim to create better innovations and long-term value for their partners and shareholders around the world.

## QUICK READ

### Indian drivers trust safety features despite doubts

**NEW DELHI**

A new survey found that many Indian drivers believe Advanced Driver Assistance Systems improve road safety, but doubts about reliability are slowing wider adoption. Around 70 percent of respondents said ADAS made driving safer, while 65 percent felt it improved convenience. However, most users complained that the technology struggles in Indian traffic and road conditions. The report, based on responses from over 1,000 car owners and buyers, showed only 15 percent were willing to pay extra for the features. Experts said poor understanding, limited demonstrations, and concerns over performance remain major challenges for automobile companies nationwide.

### Cipla shares rise despite sharp profit fall

**MUMBAI**

Cipla reported a sharp fall in quarterly profit, but investors still showed confidence in the pharmaceutical company. Net profit dropped 55 percent to Rs 555 crore due to a one-time accounting charge and weaker market conditions. Revenue also slipped nearly three percent during the quarter. Despite the decline, Cipla announced a final dividend of Rs 13 per share for eligible shareholders. The company's shares climbed 3.7 percent after the results were announced, showing positive market sentiment. Analysts believe investors are focusing on Cipla's long-term stability and strong position in India's healthcare sector despite recent financial pressure concerns.

### Food MSMEs crushed under rising compliance rules

**NEW DELHI**

India's food processing MSMEs are struggling with growing compliance burdens, according to a recent industry report. Businesses face thousands of yearly regulatory requirements involving food safety, labour laws, taxation, packaging, and environmental rules. Frequent policy changes and overlapping regulations have increased costs and legal risks for smaller companies lacking dedicated compliance teams. Experts warned that many firms risk penalties, licence suspensions, and product recalls because they cannot quickly adapt to changing standards. The report also highlighted poor infrastructure, limited testing facilities, and expensive technology upgrades as major obstacles.

## Indian businesses go global with billion-dollar deals

NEW DELHI

India's business world is booming despite global tension, recording a massive 220 deals worth $22.8 billion this past April. A new report reveals that Indian companies are feeling ambitious, aggressively buying businesses abroad to expand their reach and influence.

The surge was fueled by five "mega-deals" that alone brought in $17.4 billion. These large-scale transactions accounted for nearly 80 percent of the month's total value. While the number of deals grew slightly, the actual money involved jumped by nearly 1,000 percent compared to the previous month. This marks the highest value for mergers and acquisitions the country has seen since mid-2022.

Private equity firms also stayed busy, though they are becoming more selective. Instead of funding many small startups, they are putting larger amounts of money into fewer, more established companies.

Meanwhile, the public stock market remained healthy, with six companies successfully launching their IPOs and raising millions of dollars from investors.

Different industries saw different types of wins. The pharmaceutical sector led the way in total money spent, while the retail, tech, and manufacturing sectors were the busiest in terms of the number of individual deals. Interestingly, for the first time ever, real estate tied with the energy sector for the most deal activity. Experts say these trends show.

*India invites Kuwait to "Bharat Innovates 2026" in France, showcasing deep-tech breakthroughs in AI and green energy to foster strategic investment and economic diversification partnerships.*

## Bharat Innovates showcases hi-tech growth in France

**NEW DELHI**

India is inviting Kuwait to join its high-tech journey through an upcoming global event called "Bharat Innovates 2026." Paramita Tripathi, India's Ambassador to Kuwait, recently shared that this is a golden chance for Kuwait to invest in India's growing "deep-tech" sector, which includes advanced fields like artificial intelligence and green energy.

The main event will take place in Nice, France, from June 14 to 16. It will feature over 100 groundbreaking inventions from India's top researchers and universities. This gathering aims to bring together global investors and policymakers to see how Indian technology can solve modern problems.

Ambassador Tripathi pointed out that Kuwait is currently working on its "Vision 2035" plan to diversify its economy. By partnering with India, Kuwait can find new solutions in areas like healthcare, cybersecurity, and farming technology. India has already proven its strength with successful space missions to the Moon and Mars, and now that expertise is moving into the startup world.

With over 10,000 startups and a massive number of science and engineering graduates, India is becoming a global hub for new ideas. The country is focusing on big projects like the National Green Hydrogen Mission and space exploration. This partnership offers Kuwait a way to invest in the future while helping both nations grow. By working together, they can create new technology that benefits people far beyond their own borders, proving that collaboration is the best way to drive global progress.

## Indian goods exports set for growth boost

**NEW DELHI**

India's export sector is looking up as new data predicts the country will ship out nearly $112 billion worth of goods in the first quarter of the 2027 financial year. Reports suggests that despite a shaky global economy, Indian products remain in high demand across the world.

The forecast highlights that "non-oil" exports, which include everything from electronics to textiles, are expected to reach $97.8 billion. This represents a healthy 3.5 percent growth compared to the same time last year. Experts believe this steady rise is being fueled by India's ability to find new buyers in different countries and the success of recently signed international trade deals.

The Exim Bank uses a specialized tracking model to predict these trends. Their analysis shows that while global demand is picking up, the government's quick policy changes and credit support for businesses have played a vital role in keeping local factories busy. Additionally, favorable exchange rates are making Indian goods more attractive and affordable for foreign buyers.

However, the outlook isn't entirely without hurdles. The report warns that ongoing wars, general global uncertainty, and wild swings in the prices of raw materials could still pose risks to this growth. Even with these challenges, the momentum remains positive.

The bank plans to release its next set of predictions in August, but for now, the data suggests that India is well on its way to strengthening its position as a global trading powerhouse.

## HIDDEN PRESSURES PUSH INDIA'S INFLATION TO 5.1%

**NEW DELHI**

Everyday costs for Indian families are expected to rise moderately this year, with retail inflation projected to average 5.1 percent. Reports suggests that while prices have stayed relatively calm so far, several "hidden" pressures are beginning to move toward the consumer's wallet.

In April, inflation saw a tiny nudge upward to 3.48 percent. Up until now, the government has helped shield the public by keeping petrol and diesel prices steady at the pump. However, the report warns that this protection might not last forever. With global oil prices expected to climb as high as $95 per barrel due to Middle East tensions, the cost of transporting goods is becoming much more expensive for companies.

It isn't just fuel that is a concern. Experts are worried that a "below-normal" monsoon season and intense heatwaves could damage crops. If farming is hit hard, food prices - which have been low recently could jump back up. Additionally.

**INFLATION ALERT**

## *RBI Governor warns of possible price surgeT*

**NEW DELHI**

India may soon see a hike in petrol and diesel prices if the conflict involving Iran continues to drive up global oil costs. RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra warned that the rising price of crude oil is putting a heavy strain on the country's economy and testing its ability to keep inflation under control.

The Governor explained that while the central bank has tried to support economic growth by keeping interest rates steady, a long-term war in the Middle East would eventually force prices up. If fuel becomes more expensive, the cost of transporting goods will also rise, making everyday items pricier for families across India. Currently, the RBI is in a "wait and watch" mode, but officials say they are ready to act if these high costs become permanent.

The situation is becoming urgent for oil companies as well. Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri revealed that state-run oil firms are losing nearly Rs 1,000 crore every day. Even though global oil has crossed $100 per barrel, local pump prices have stayed the same, causing these companies to pile up massive debts.

India is particularly vulnerable because it imports 88% of its oil. While the Minister assured the public that India has enough fuel stocks to last about 76 days, the financial pressure is mounting. To keep supplies steady, the government has already boosted LPG production. However, with losses reaching nearly Rs 2 lakh crore, officials hint that a price adjustment is now just a matter of time.

# Australia invests millions to grow India ties

**NEW DELHI**

**Australia allocates $25.3 million in its budget to strengthen economic ties, security, and trade partnerships with India.**

Australia is putting its money where its mouth is by setting aside $25.3 million in its new budget to boost its friendship with India.

This financial boost is designed to tighten the economic and military bonds between the two nations, especially as the world deals with shifting politics and global trade uncertainty.

The funding is part of a "Strategic Partnership" that helps Australian businesses find success in India's massive, growing market. A key part of the plan includes the "Maitri" grants, which fund new projects in areas like clean energy, technology, and education. Additionally, a large chunk of the money will go toward keeping the Indian Ocean safe and secure for trade.

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong noted that in a time of global chaos and conflict, Australia wants to be a reliable partner that India can count on. The timing is perfect, as trade between the two countries is already booming. Over the last few years, Indian exports to Australia have more than doubled, reaching $8.5 billion.

A major reason for this success is a trade deal signed four years ago. As of January 1, 2026, almost all Indian goods can enter Australia without paying any extra taxes or duties. By removing these costs, both countries are making it easier for local companies to sell their products abroad. This budget hike ensures that this momentum continues, creating more jobs and a more stable future for the entire region.

## Uber, Adani Group partner for data center

**AHMEDABAD**

In a major boost to India's tech landscape, ride-hailing giant Uber has announced it will build its first Indian data center in partnership with the Adani Group. Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi shared the news following a high-profile meeting with Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani, highlighting India's transformation into a global innovation powerhouse.

The new facility is scheduled to be ready later this year. It will serve as a testing ground for Uber's latest technology, helping the company develop and deploy digital solutions at a massive scale. Khosrowshahi emphasized that this project isn't just for local users, it follows a "from India, for the world" philosophy, using Indian engineering talent to improve services globally.

The partnership is a perfect match for the Adani Group, which is currently pouring billions into digital infrastructure. The conglomerate is already working on a massive $10 billion project to create "AI-ready" data centers across the country. By joining forces, Uber gains a reliable, high-tech home for its data, while the Adani Group strengthens its position as a leader in India's digital future.

As more people use apps for travel and deliveries, the need for fast, secure data storage is skyrocketing. This investment ensures that Uber can keep up with demand while contributing to India's goal of becoming a top destination for technology and research. For everyday users, this means smarter, faster, and more reliable app experiences powered by homegrown infrastructure.

## Low scrap supply hinders eco-friendly steel

**NEW DELHI**

India is facing a major hurdle in its race to produce eco-friendly "green steel" due to a severe shortage of recycled scrap. Sanjay Kumar Singh, a former Steel Secretary, revealed that only 25% of the nation's steel demand can currently be met using scrap-based methods, leaving the industry heavily reliant on traditional iron ore.

Speaking at a national mining and metals conclave, Singh explained that while using scrap and renewable energy can cut carbon emissions by 80%, the country simply doesn't have enough old metal to recycle. This forces manufacturers to use blast furnaces, which consume more energy and release higher levels of carbon dioxide. To make matters worse, the quality of iron ore found in India is rapidly declining, meaning even more energy is needed to process it.

Despite these challenges, the Indian steel sector is growing fast. Crude steel production has hit nearly 169 million tonnes, growing at about 9% every year. To balance this growth with environmental goals, the government is pushing initiatives like the National Green Hydrogen Mission and a proposed "Green Steel Mission."

Singh also highlighted the Carbon Credit Trading System, a program where companies that cut emissions earn credits, while heavy polluters must pay up. While this is currently optional, it will soon become mandatory. For now, the industry is focusing on pilot projects to test new tech, but until scrap collection improves, fully green steel remains a difficult goal.

## Govt hikes crop prices to help farmers

**NEW DELHI**

In a major move to support India's farming community, the Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved a price hike for 14 essential summer-sown crops.

This increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for the 2026-27 season ensures that farmers receive at least 50% profit over their production costs.

The biggest winners this year are growers of sunflower seeds, who will see a price jump of Rs 622 per quintal. Significant increases were also announced for cotton, nigerseed, and sesamum.

By offering better prices for these specific items, the government hopes to encourage farmers to move away from traditional cereals and grow more pulses and oilseeds, which are in high demand.

# PBKS Must Avoid Overanalysing Losses, Says Coach Bahutule

## Punjab Kings urged to stay positive ahead of crucial Mumbai Indians IPL clash

**DHARAMSHALA**

Punjab Kings spin-bowling coach Sairaj Bahutule believes his side must avoid dwelling on defeats and instead focus on learning quickly as the IPL 2026 season enters a decisive phase.

Following Punjab Kings' fourth consecutive defeat, this time against Delhi Capitals in Dharamshala, Bahutule admitted the team was disappointed but stressed the need to move on swiftly in the demanding IPL schedule.

"Obviously, everyone is disappointed, but we cannot overthink and overanalyse. In a couple of days' time, we will be playing Mumbai Indians here. It is important to take the learnings from this game," Bahutule said.

Punjab appeared to have the contest under control for large periods before Delhi Capitals successfully chased down a daunting 211-run target. Bahutule pointed to lapses in the closing stages, particularly in bowling execution and fielding standards, as the turning point. "We will certainly look into phases of our bowling and the fielding part. We almost had the game in the bag, but we did not execute the skills in the last five overs. If we had taken the two catches, DC may not have reached the target," he explained.

Despite the losing streak, Bahutule remained optimistic about Punjab's playoff hopes. Led by captain Shreyas Iyer, the team still has opportunities to revive its campaign in the remaining league matches.

"We are still in the hunt to qualify for the playoffs. There are going to be a lot of ups and downs. We have to put these losses behind us and move ahead," he added.

Delhi Capitals' victory was powered by young all-rounder Madhav Tiwari, who impressed in his first appearance of the season. The 22-year-old picked up two crucial wickets before playing a composed unbeaten knock of 18 runs off just eight balls during the chase. "I just tried to control my nerves and do the basics well. I was in the zone and wanted to win," Madhav said after the match.

Delhi eventually completed the 211-run chase comfortably, adding to Punjab Kings' growing concerns ahead of their must-win clash against Mumbai Indians.

# Bowlers Need To Catch Up In Modern T20 Cricket, Says Dravid

**Former India coach says evolving batting standards are reshaping modern T20 cricket completely**

**NEW DELHI**

Former India head coach Rahul Dravid believes bowlers are struggling to keep pace with the rapid evolution of T20 batting, saying the format has tilted heavily in favour of aggressive batters in recent years.

Dravid, who guided India to the 2024 T20 World Cup title, praised the fearless approach of young Indian batters and said modern players are now accessing parts of the ground that were once considered impossible to target consistently.

Dravid said the quality of batting in the shortest format has improved dramatically over the last few seasons.

"To see the quality of batting that has happened over the last two or three years, I think the bowlers in that format of the game will slowly have to do some catching up," Dravid said.

He singled out emerging stars like Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Ayush Mhatre, Priyansh Arya and India's top-ranked T20 batter Abhishek Sharma for changing the approach to Power-play batting with their attacking mindset.

"I think batsmanship and the ability to hit sixes and access different parts of the ground has improved leaps and bounds," he added.

While acknowledging that bowlers are currently under pressure in T20 cricket, Dravid expressed confidence that they would eventually adapt by developing new skills and strategies.

"Probably a lot more batsmen are able to cope with the requirements of the modern T20 game than some of the bowlers have been able to at this point. That may change in two or three years," he said.

Dravid also pointed out that the balance is different in Test cricket, where bowlers continue to dominate and produce result-oriented matches regularly.

The former India captain suggested that slightly more challenging pitches could help restore balance in T20 cricket by giving bowlers additional assistance through turn, bounce or movement.

"They may need a little bit of support. We don't want the balance to be too skewed either way — towards batters or bowlers," Dravid observed.

He, however, avoided recommending specific rule changes such as increasing the number of bouncers per over, saying the game naturally goes through phases where either bat or ball dominates.

*Punjab Kings urge responsible reporting after online rumours spark controversy around franchise players*

# PBKS Clarifies Stand amid Rumours, Revises Social Media Statement

**NEW DELHI**

Punjab Kings has issued a clarification amid rising social media speculation surrounding some of its players, urging fans and media platforms to avoid spreading unverified rumours that could damage the franchise's image.

The controversy emerged after a video allegedly showing spinner Yuzvendra Chahal vaping during a flight surfaced online. Around the same time, discussions regarding opener Prabhsimran Singh's fitness and reported weight gain also gained traction across social media platforms.

Responding to the growing chatter, Punjab Kings released a statement on its official X account, stressing the difference between criticism and misinformation.

"Criticism, banter, and opinions are part of sport. Fake stories and made-up narratives for cheap engagement are not," the franchise initially posted.

The original statement specifically urged "sports journalists" to verify facts before circulating information online. However, the post was later deleted and reposted after removing the phrase "sports journalists," seemingly to avoid further controversy.

The revised version retained the franchise's appeal for responsible reporting and social media conduct while dropping the direct reference to journalists.

Punjab Kings co-owner Preity Zinta also reacted strongly to the issue, backing the team's stand against misinformation.

"There's a difference between criticism and calculated misinformation. Healthy debate around the game is welcome, but the deliberate spread of fake narratives to damage individuals, the team, or the brand should not and will not be taken lightly," Zinta wrote on X.

# Bangar Backs KKR for Historic IPL Comeback Push

**RAIPUR**

Former India batting coach Sanjay Bangar believes Kolkata Knight Riders are capable of scripting one of the greatest comeback stories in IPL history as the two-time champions continue their late surge in the 2026 season.

After struggling near the bottom of the points table for much of the campaign, KKR have dramatically revived their playoff hopes by winning four consecutive matches. Their turnaround has reignited belief among fans and experts alike, with the side suddenly emerging as a dangerous contender heading into the final phase of the tournament.

Bangar said Kolkata finally appear to have found the right balance after weeks of inconsistency.

"KKR have won four matches in a row. Their team balance is looking solid. The spin attack has regained its bite, and the batting unit is firing consistently. They are peaking at the right time, which is what matters most in a long tournament," Bangar said. The former India coach highlighted the growing confidence within the squad and stressed that teams building momentum late in the competition often become serious title contenders.

"Teams that build momentum towards the business end often go deep into the playoffs. KKR are in a very good space right now. That's why their playoff probability has gone up significantly," he added.

KKR currently sit eighth on the IPL 2026 standings with nine points from 10 matches, but they still have four league games remaining. Bangar believes winning all four could transform their difficult campaign into a memorable recovery story.

"If they win their remaining four games, they will pull off one of the greatest comebacks in IPL history. From the bottom of the table to the top four, that would be a remarkable turnaround. It will take a special effort, but with the form they are in, it looks possible," Bangar stated.

# SPECULATION GROWS OVER HARDIK PANDYA'S FUTURE WITH MI FRANCHISE

**MUMBAI**

Speculation surrounding Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya has intensified after fans noticed changes in his social media activity following the franchise's disappointing IPL 2026 season.

Mumbai Indians became the first team to be eliminated from playoff contention this season, managing only three wins and missing the playoffs for the fourth time in the last six editions. The poor campaign has triggered widespread criticism, with attention now shifting toward Pandya's future as captain.

Rumours began circulating after several fans claimed that Pandya had unfollowed Mumbai Indians' official Instagram account following the team's defeat against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Social media users also pointed out that posts and collaborations related to Mumbai Indians appeared to have been archived or removed from the all-rounder's profile.

Although neither the player nor the franchise has officially commented on the reports, the developments sparked intense debate online. Fans have started speculating whether Pandya could part ways with the five-time IPL champions ahead of next season. Some social media discussions even linked the Indian all-rounder with a possible move to Chennai Super Kings after he was seen speaking with CSK chief executive Kasi Viswanathan following a recent MI-CSK encounter. Others suggested Royal Challengers Bengaluru or Kolkata Knight Riders as potential destinations if he leaves Mumbai Indians.

# Scheffler chases breakthrough after runner-up run at PGA defence

**NEWTOWN SQUARE**

Scottie Scheffler is the defending champion at the PGA Championship and arrives at Aronimink Golf Club carrying an unusual run of three straight runner-up finishes that have tested his patience but not dented his confidence. Runner-up finishes to Rory McIlroy at the Masters, a playoff loss to Matt Fitzpatrick at the RBC Heritage, and another close call behind Cameron Young have defined his recent weeks.

He joked that his wife noted the streak, but said the performances show he is close rather than struggling. Scheffler remains world No. 1 and has not finished outside the top 30 since 2024, underlining his consistency.

Rory McIlroy, Jon Rahm and Jordan Spieth headline a stacked field, with Scheffler and McIlroy having shared most of the recent majors between them. The course is expected to challenge precision into heavily contoured greens, which Xander Schauffele called "diabolical."

McIlroy, who won the Masters last year, said strategy off the tee may be limited but second-shot control will be crucial. Scheffler said finishing second is painful but often easier to analyze than poorer results.

A repeat victory would place Scheffler alongside Tiger Woods and Brooks Koepka in rare PGA Championship history, adding further weight to his pursuit of a third straight season at world No. 1.

Jon Rahm and Xander Schauffele are also among the contenders, with firm conditions expected to expose every mistake across the weekend at Aronimink Golf Club in Pennsylvania shaping major championship drama this week unfolding drama.

# Vettori Praises GT Bowlers after SRH's Crushing Defeat

**AHMEDABAD**

Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Daniel Vettori admitted that Gujarat Titans thoroughly outplayed his side with a disciplined and clinical bowling display during their IPL clash in Ahmedabad.

After posting 168 for 5, Gujarat Titans dismantled SRH for just 86 to register a massive 82-run victory — Sunrisers' biggest defeat in IPL history in terms of runs. Half-centuries from Sai Sudharsan and Washington Sundar laid the platform for GT before their pace attack ripped through Hyderabad's batting lineup on a seam-friendly surface.

Vettori credited Gujarat Titans for executing their plans perfectly with both bat and ball.

"Really good performance by GT, they put us under a lot of pressure with the ball and then the opening pair set it up so well. We were satisfied at the halfway mark, we knew we are coming up against their bowling line-up," Vettori said.

He acknowledged the challenge of facing an attack featuring Mohammed Siraj, Kagiso Rabada, Prasidh Krishna and Rashid Khan.

"Five seamers plus Rashid is always going to be challenging. We didn't get the start we wanted and they were able to capitalise. Their bowling was brilliant," he added.

Vettori described Gujarat Titans as a "formidable team" capable of adapting quickly to conditions. He said GT were especially effective in utilising the helpful pitch conditions in Ahmedabad.

Despite the crushing defeat, the former New Zealand spinner defended his batting unit, saying one poor outing should not overshadow their impressive campaign so far.

"169 we thought we had a chance, but I don't put any blame on the batting unit. They have been exceptional this year. Every team in the IPL is going to have small blips once in a while and ours was tonight," he said. Vettori also praised SRH's bowlers for restricting Gujarat below 170, insisting the total still looked chaseable at the innings break.

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